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AUSTRALIAN CAPERS:

OR

CHRISTOPHER COCKLE'S COLONIAL EXPERIENCE.

BY

OLD BOOMERANG,

AUTHOR OF AUSTRALIAN TALES, AND SKETCHES FROM REAL LIFE, RHYMES, ETC.

(Measure for Measure)

WITH AN INTRODUCTION

BY THE

REV. DR. STEEL,

AUTHOR OF "DOING GOOD," "LIVES MADE SUBLIME," &c., MINISTER OF
ST. STEPHEN'S CHURCH, SYDNEY.

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TO

THOMAS HOLT, ESQ., M.L.A.,

OF THE WARREN, NEAR SYDNEY, NEW SOUTH WALES,

WHO HAS ATTESTED HIMSELF THE

FRIEND AND PATRON

OF ALL THAT TENDS TO DEVELOPE THE

MATERIAL RESOURCES, PROMOTE THE INTELLECTUAL

ADVANCEMENT, AND SECURE THE

MORAL AND RELIGIOUS WELL-BEING OF AUSTRALIA,

THIS VOLUME

Is most respectfully Inscribed by

THE AUTHOR.



The Author has been honoured with Testimonials from twenty of the leading literary gentlemen of the colony, who have examined his MSS. To publish them all would be obviously impracticable. He subjoins three of the most brief.

Copy of Letter from NICOL D. STENHOUSE, Esq., J.P.

WATerview HOUSE, BALMAIN,
June 22nd, 1866.

MY DEAR SIR,

I AM still suffering so much from influenza that I can do little more than express the high gratification I have felt in reading the specimen you sent me of your excellent tale. I think it is calculated to be of great service to the young, and to emigrants of all descriptions. The style is very pleasant, and the reader must feel throughout that he is breathing a Christian atmosphere.

With the sincerest wishes for the success of the work,

I remain,

My dear Sir,

Very truly yours,

(Signed)

NICOL D. STENHOUSE.

To J. R. Houlding, Esq., Sydney.

Copy of Letter from Rev. SAMUEL CHAMBERS KENT,
Principal, Camden College, Newtown.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

HEREWITH I return your manuscript entitled "Australian Capers: or, Christopher Cockle's Colonial Experience," which I have read through with interest and pleasure.

You have succeeded in producing a book which is both amusing and instructive; which will be read with profit by

intending emigrants, and which numbers in the colonies will be glad to possess.

I am, my dear friend,

Affectionately yours,

(Signed) SAMUEL C. KENT.

To John Richard Houlding, Esq., Darlinghurst, Sydney.

Copy of Letter from REV. JOSEPH H. FLETCHER,
Principal of Newington College.

NEWINGTON, PARRAMATTA RIVER,
WESLEYAN COLLEGIATE INSTITUTION,
June 10th, 1866.

MY DEAR SIR,

WITH the aid of your MSS. from Chapter I. to XV., I have duly rejoiced with placid Mr. Noah Cockle at the birth of his son Christopher; have taken a merry voyage in the luxurious steamer "Calabash;" have smiled at Tim Rafferty, steward, philosopher, and wit; and have pitied the verdant Christopher in his painful and costly induction into common sense and colonial experience.

If anything short of actual suffering can wake up such human *shell-fish*, it will be a book like yours, with humour enough to make them read it, and enough of the salt of wisdom lurking in it everywhere to improve their mental health before they have done with it. So much good service has never before been done with a "BOOMERANG." I most heartily desire that it may strike your aim, as smartly and beneficially as you intend, and fly back to your feet with enough golden dust about it to afford you some substantial remuneration for your labour.

I am, my dear Sir,

Yours truly,

(Signed) JOSEPH H. FLETCHER.

To J. R. Houlding, Esq., Sea View Terrace.

AUTHOR'S PREFACE.

ANY man who is bold enough to publish a book must be content to be criticized. I do not deprecate honest comment. Though the admission may savour of presumption, I own that I have more dread of censure from persons who will not look beyond the first chapter of my book, than from those who will patiently read it to the end. The main object of the work is, to warn parents in England and elsewhere against sending their *inexperienced* sons to Australia with large capital, and their young daughters without protection. It also contains many practical hints and counsels, which will be useful to emigrants, both young and old.

Though I do not assume high literary merit for my book, I have bestowed much care and consideration upon it, and have tried my best to make it both amusing and instructive. The preceding recommendations from gentlemen of such established literary reputation, together with the extracts in the Appendix, render it unnecessary for me to offer many prefatory remarks; and I will only add this simple request to the reader, "Read it through, before you judge it."

OLD BOOMERANG.

INTRODUCTION.

THE author of "The Colonial Experience of Christopher Cockle" has already won his laurels in the Australian press, and is well known and highly esteemed as a writer by the thousands who read the weekly issues of the "Sydney Mail." But his admirers here have thought that he deserves a wider sphere, and more numerous readers, than a colonial public can afford him. In the following work he puts forth his claims. The tale is agreeably written, is light and sketchy, and abounding with incident peculiar to Australia. The moral is always apparent and impressive. The reader will laugh and cry alternately, and have serious moods as well, in going through the adventurous history of the son of the Alderman of London, and fishmonger of Billingsgate. If the reader be a parent, and about to send his son from home; or if he be a son, about to emigrate to Australia; he will find important information and good counsel in the story, which he would in vain search for in the guide-books. If he be a colonist in the city or the bush, he will acknowledge the

accuracy and the beauty of the description, and the value of the hints of our author.

It is well to remember that literature received a great impulse in the classical age, from the spirit of inquiry and enterprise which characterized the Greek colonies that fringed the coasts of Asia Minor and of Southern Italy. Greece herself felt the impression; and the Grove, the Academy, the Painted Porch, and the Lyceum were indebted to the advanced philosophy of colonial thinkers. English colonies, whether dependent on the Crown, or independent in government, have also contributed, though in a less degree, to the wealth of the Republic of Letters. Eminent names in modern thought and science have come forth from the pastoral cures of the backwoods and the embryo colleges of America. The *Belles Lettres* are always later in flourishing in colonial spheres; but the works of Washington Irving, Prescott, Cooper, and Longfellow, are often reprinted in London. So are the theological works of Transatlantic divines, too numerous to specify. The reprints are as creditable to the talents of the *new* world, as they are agreeable to the advanced civilization of the *old* world.

Contributions to literature by Australian writers have necessarily been few; for none of the colonies is a century old, and most are only a quarter of a century peopled to any extent. The native talent has scarcely had time to develope. But the emigrant literature has not been despicable. "The Brisbane Catalogue of Stars" in the Southern sky was a great

addition to astronomical science. Gould's "Birds of Australia" enriched ornithology. Geology and kindred sciences received much from the researches of Count Strzelecki, Sir Thomas Mitchell, Rev. W. B. Clarke; and various other explorers, whose adventurous travels almost rival Livingstone's. Botany, from the days of Sir Joseph Banks to those of Dr. Bennett, has received contributions from the "Flora Australasia." History, from the pens of Dr. Lang, Rev. John West, Mr. Westgarth, Mr. Flanagan, &c., has received quite a library of well written and readable volumes, which recount the wonderful progress of this southern land. Some of the Professors of the Universities of Sydney and Melbourne have published their lectures, to show—as in the case of the lamented Dr. Woolley, who perished in the "London"—what Mechanics' Schools of Art can appreciate in Australia; and—as in the case of Professor Hearn's "Plutology"—what pabulum is offered to students in young colonial seats of learning. Amidst the monotony of bush scenery that abounds, there are spots romantic and picturesque enough; and amidst pastoral life of patriarchal simplicity, incidents of sufficient interest to excite poetic genius; and Halloran and Kendall have published poems which have attracted the favourable regard of London critics. Nor are the writers in the daily and weekly press of Sydney, Melbourne, Adelaide, and Brisbane, devoid of elegant and powerful pens.

As a specimen of one of the tale writers of

Australia, we introduce OLD BOOMERANG, the author of "The Colonial Experience of Christopher Cockle," to Anglo-Saxon readers. His observations on men and manners, as narrated in this story, are not the result of a rapid tour, or a few years' sojourn, but of the long experience of nearly thirty years. Readers may therefore rely on his truthfulness, safely accept his views, and follow his counsels.

We trust they will not think the less favourably of Australia because of the recorded temptations and falls of Christopher Cockle ; but, from the brighter pictures of life and character which pervade the latter part of the work, be encouraged to hope well of a country which affords so many facilities to success, when it is sought by persons of right principle, pure affection, and honest industry. It is a pity when young men come to a land so far away from home, with "seedy" characters, or too much loose cash. Restraints are weaker where family influence is distant, and temptations are abundant where money is plentiful. The best colonists are the well principled, the energetic, and the persevering, who have virtue to resist temptation, pluck to face difficulties and dangers, and patience to endure trials. There are yet richer stores in the future of Australia than the discovered gold. We only want a greater population to occupy and develop a land full of all the material resources which, rightly used, can aid to make a country and a people great.

If the narrative of "The Colonial Experiences of

Christopher Cockle" finds favour, as we believe it will, from the reading millions of Great Britain and Ireland, Australia will reap the benefit, and will hold in reverent and grateful regard the memory of OLD BOOMERANG.

ROBERT STEEL, M.A., PH.D.

Sydney, June 19th, 1866.

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AUSTRALIAN CAPERS ;

OR,

CHRISTOPHER COCKLE'S COLONIAL EXPERIENCE.

CHAPTER I.

CONTAINS a brief Account of the Birth of Christopher Cockle, and the jubilant Capers of his worthy Sire on the Occasion.

MR. NOAH COCKLE'S mind was usually as placid as a willow-margined pool. He could 'cross any of the crowded streets of London, as free from nervous qualms as a brewer's drayman ; and amid the clamour and bustle of Billingsgate Market on "Oyster day," or in the height of the sprat season, he always kept his eye to business, and was as calm and collected as though he were sitting in his easy-chair at home, smoking his meerschaum.

On one occasion he unluckily tumbled head foremost into the workhouse well, when paying an official visit ; but instead of making a loud outcry, as an ordinary man would have done, he, with the simplicity of mere instinct, reversed his position without delay, and coolly trod water ; or, as he jocosely remarked, practised his dancing ; while the beadle and a *posse* of paupers ran to the engine-stations for the fire-escape ladder to rescue the worthy chairman of the parochial board.

I could, if necessary, cite many other interesting incidents to prove that, in general, Mr. Cockle was as cool-headed as a Greenland seal, or a tight-rope dancer, though it is very probable that on the night of the first of April, 1834, a stranger beholding him would have formed a contrary opinion. But there was an extraordinary cause for his trepidation on that occasion, which I shall briefly explain ; and doubtless many young Benedicks will sympathize with him.

For a week or two previously, old Mrs. Cabbs, the monthly

nurse, had been ruler of his household, and his dear wife Sally had been daily expecting to delight his eyes with the sight of a "little stranger." Every one knows the effect of hope deferred upon the human heart; and the nervous system is, of course, closely connected with that vital organ. Only let a man's breast be harassed with anxious hopes and fears, day and night, for a fortnight, and if he does not feel in some degree enervated, it might reasonably be supposed that he has no nerves.

At all events, Mr. Cockle felt uncommonly excitable on the night above named, for it was a new trial for him; and as he paced up and down his front verandah, he felt—to use his own figure—as fidgetty as a country lass in a town kitchen full of blackbeetles. Dr. Dilly and Mrs. Cabbs were in his wife's chamber, and he could not but be aware that they were very busy; in fact, there was a sort of subdued bustle throughout the household, and, like all active minds, he was anxious to help in some way or other, but there was no experienced person at hand to direct his energies.

From time to time he had entered the house to perform some voluntary little act which had suddenly struck him as being helpful in the crisis. At one time it was to unscrew the clapper from the clock bell; then to wedge up the rattling windows and oil the hinges of the doors; and, finally, to kick the cat into the kitchen. He had solemnly exhorted the servants, some hours before, to exert themselves to the utmost; and warned them to be very careful not to do or say anything that was likely to excite their mistress or Mrs. Cabbs; to keep a good fire in the grate, but to take care not to set the chimney on fire; and, by all means, to have plenty of boiling water in the kettle. His reasons for giving the latter order he could not have otherwise explained than that he had a floating idea in his mind that hot water should always be in readiness whenever the doctor is in the house. Though he suspected the girls in the kitchen would slyly call him "Molly," and other fancy nicknames, for meddling in their department, he felt that the emergency of the case warranted him in stepping beyond his ordinary bounds of duty.

A little before midnight, while he was walking to and fro with increased speed, and smoking furiously, Jemima the housemaid came running out of the house, grinning like a steel-trap, and in five words communicated to him the electrifying news, that he was a father.

The said Jemima was of a drowsy disposition, and had never been a favourite with Mr. Cockle; but on that night his feelings

towards her underwent a change. A few hours before, while making divers stimulating promises to the cook and her assistant, he had also promised Jemima a pair of new shoes conditional upon her showing agility and watchfulness on the present trying occasion, which promise had a decided influence on her actions; for though Mr. Cockle had often seen the girl grin, he had never before seen her run. He thought her activity betokened zeal for the interests of his house, which quite touched his feelings, and from that moment he liked her.

"You don't say so, Jemima!" he exclaimed, when the panting girl shouted in his ear, "Missis has got a baby!" Simultaneously, he dashed his pipe to the earth, and darted into the house. In the excess of his joy, he had almost invaded the "tabooed" apartment; but his innate sense of propriety came just in time to stop him; so did the stalwart Jemima, for she seized his coat-tails, and held him as tightly as a constable; for which extraordinary familiarity he, however, forgave her on the instant, as it was clearly the spontaneous effect of exuberant delight, combined with a very proper sense of decorum,—nothing more. At the same instant he heard sounds from within, which he declared were the sweetest music he had ever listened to: so tender, yet so wonderfully touching, that it unmanned him in a moment, literally knocked him down on a sofa, where for a short time he lay and gushed over with a deliciously new emotion, which none but fond sires can realize.

"Yes, Sir, it is a fact." (I quote his words to a sympathizing friend next day.) "That soft little voice, scarcely louder than a kitten's, did more than a brawny blacksmith's knuckles could have done—it made me cry, and I don't blush to confess it, though I am a Common Councilman of the City of London. But my tears were the outpourings of joy, Sir; of capering ecstasy too tender to be appreciated by single men, or other half-civilized beings. Don't mistake it, Sir; it was not a puerile ebullition. Nothing of the sort. The captain of an iron-clad frigate would have felt as I did, under the circumstances, if his heart were not iron-clad. Ods bobs! show me the man who would not feel jubilant at such a time, and I will say to you, Don't trust him very far. Why, Sir, I have seen one of the most popular parsons of the day capering with paternal glory, like one of the automaton figures in a barrel organ, on hearing the first shrill cries of his firstborn.

"It might impair my civic dignity were it publicly known, but I don't mind telling you in confidence, Sir," added Mr.

Cockle, "that I was seized with an almost irresistible disposition to dance; and I do believe, had Mrs. Cabbs been disengaged, much as I had dreaded that fussy old lady for the last fortnight, I should have yielded to the merry impulse, and danced an extemporaneous fandango with her round the dining-room table, to the lively music of my iddleum, tiddleum, firstborn boy's silvery voice. You have no idea, Sir, what a frolicsome spasm I was seized with for a few minutes. Fortunately, however, Mrs. Cabbs was busy in the bedroom, so I was saved from that undignified exhibition,—which I dare say the doctor would have disapproved of,—and in a short time the unprecedented saltatory infatuation had effervesced, and a glowing calm ensued, during which my fancy looked forward, ever so many years, and pictured my son's gradual ascent up the ladder of life, until I beheld him proudly presiding at a Guildhall banquet, as Lord Mayor of London.".....

Mr. Cockle was stretched on the dining-room sofa, with his eyes closed, and a beaming smile on his face, as though some exquisitely gentle hand were tickling his neck with a little gosling's tail; when suddenly Mrs. Cabbs trotted into the room, her mahogany face looking very warm, and shining like French polish. Holding up the newly arrived infant before her master's twinkling eyes, she exclaimed, in nurses' phraseology, "Here is de iddle titsy witsy—bless it! Did it want to see its daddy, den? Hoosh, my precious poppit, hoosh! Now, Sir, hold out your hands, and take a good look at the 'little stranger.' Isn't it a pretty little pip, Sir?"

Mr. Cockle took the infant in his hands and kissed it, but with as much caution as though he were fearful of killing it with his beard, or of dropping it in his over anxiety to hold it tight.

"It's a beautiful liddle bud, bless its heart!" said Mrs Cabbs with professional pride; "like a sweet little cherub, made of beeswax and cherry blossoms, that it is. Be careful of its back, Sir. There, that's it; hold its little head up. You needn't fear, Sir, it's pinned up all right."

"Dear me! it's very light, Mrs. Cabbs," remarked Mr. Cockle, as he dandled his son in his outstretched hands, and tried to amuse it by clumsily imitating the clucking of a hen, and making a variety of guttural sounds, impossible to spell, peculiar to glad papas. "I declare it isn't much bigger than a dressed rabbit. Now don't you think it is a very small child, Mrs. Cabbs? Tell me, candidly."

"Small, Sir! Bless your soul, no! It's an immense baby, a regular young giant; ask Dr. Dilly if it isn't. Why, it is bigger than Mrs. Nooky's last infant was at a fortnight old, that's a fact. I declare, Sir, it's the finest little chick I ever nursed, without exception."

"I should not have thought it," said Mr. Cockle, with wonder in his looks. "It seems a very light weight to me; but the fact is, I never handled a new baby before: so I am not a good judge. What colour are its eyes, nurse?"

"Eyes, Sir? Why, they are stone blue at present, but they'll change very soon; sure to change. They will be beautiful black eyes by and bye,—like grapes. Fine eyes, bless it! Eyes and hair like its mammy's, exactly."

"Whom do you really think it is like, upon the whole, Mrs. Cabbs?" asked Mr. Cockle, smirking the while as though he were standing before a photographic camera, with the artist's head inside the baize bag.

"Like, Sir? why, the very image of yourself; anybody could see that with one eye. Pretty creature; I never saw a more exact miniature portrait in all my born days, never. It's wonderful."

"But its nose looks such a queer shape, nurse," said Mr. Cockle, appealingly. "Nobody would take that for a Roman."

"I don't care for a Roman or any other man," replied Mrs. Cabbs, positively. "I say it's a beautiful baby altogether; and I've seen a few before to-day. It's a blessed little image, and you ought to be proud of it, Sir. Just look at its tiddy iddle ears,—perfect pictures; and its toe-nails, like tiny white shells out of a fairy's grotto; and its hair like the delicate down on a little yellow duck. O, it's a real beauty, that's what it is; and nobody shall say it isn't. Give it to me, Sir. Tum to its nussey, den. It's a pitty iddle tiddley middley wix, dat's what it is. Hoosh, hoosh—sh—hoosh—sh! Muz-zy, muzzy, muzzy."

The foregoing relation briefly describes the advent of the hero of my book, who in due course was christened Christopher Wren, and was fondly welcomed into society as the son and heir of Councillor Cockle, wholesale fishmonger of Billingsgate Market, and of Turtlesell Lodge, Upper Tooting, in the county of Surrey.

The interest of my story does not demand that I should attempt a description of the unprecedented excitement in the

Cockle family consequent upon the arrival of the heir to their house,—to minutely depict the rapture of grandmother, the quiet joy of uncle Peter, and the intense admiration of a large circle of friends. So I will merely remark that he was declared to be a remarkably fine boy by some, a little prodigy by others, a real darling duck by his doting parents, and a disagreeable squalling little brat by Mary Ann, the nursemaid; the latter opinion, of course, was private.

Time sped on, and he soon grew into short clothes. At ten months old, he began to toddle, which every one said was surprising. His eye-teeth were as hard to cut as diamonds; but they came at last, after a very squally season, and were pronounced to be “pretty little toosems” by all his admiring friends. Mumps, measles, and sundry other incidentals, assailed him before he reached his fifth year; but he loudly triumphed over them all, and grew up the joy of his father and the pride of his mother. And though they had been blessed with a little daughter two years after the birth of our hero, he still held the paramount place in their affections.

As he stretched out of frocks and trowsers into tunics, his taste for toys and lollipops developed itself, and his wit soon perceived that he might obtain an unlimited supply, if his father were not near, by merely crying for them. In short, he soon became a spoiled boy, and, in the gardener’s opinion, a regular nuisance; for he did more mischief among the flowers in one hour, than a farm-yard full of hungry poultry would have done in two. It was a doubtful matter with the other servants whether old Rakes was sincere in his sympathy with Master Kit after he pulled the garden roller on his toes; and they always suspected that the irritated gardener had purposely placed the nettles in the strawberry bed, which had so wofully stung his young master.....

The elementary education of Christopher and his sister was intrusted to Miss Fagg, the nursery governess; but that lady was overheard to remark, one wet afternoon, that she envied the keeper of the baboons in Wombwell’s menagerie. So she received a quiet intimation next day that her services could be dispensed with; and grandmother was installed into Miss Fagg’s office by particular request; which post she filled with *éclat* until Christopher was ten years old, when he was sent to boarding school. It is needless to comment on that experienced old dame’s tutelary discipline. I merely remark that it was about as perfect as grandmothers’ training in general. At all

events, her pupils were pleased with it, if their parents were not.

I think I have recorded all that is necessary to record of the early history of the erratic young gentleman whose varied ups and downs on sea and on shore I am about to chronicle.

If the reader will kindly exercise patience over the two succeeding chapters, which contain some rather prosy descriptions necessary to my story, I promise there shall be no lack of stirring incidents in the chapters that follow.

CHAPTER II.

IN which the Hero of the Story and other important Persons are introduced, including "Lucky Sam," a Gold-Digger just returned from Australia; from whom Christopher catches the Gold Fever.

I WOULD now beg to introduce the reader to Christopher Cockle in his twentieth year. He was a slim youth, with a face as smooth as a silver spoon, and almost as bare of intellectual evidences as the countenance of a young kitten. At ten years old he had entered Mr. Nouse's establishment for young gentlemen at Norwood, and during his academical career he had received more *marks* of a certain kind than any of his compeers; or, in other words, more hoistings than honours. In his seventeenth year he left school as joyfully as any poor debtor ever left gaol; and soon afterward he was installed as junior clerk in the office of his uncle, Peter Cobb, an extensive nut and fruit merchant, in Lower Thames Street, London. His stay there was short; for the dusty effluvia from mouldy lemons and doubtful nuts oppressed his chest and made him wheezy, or so he assured his indulgent mother, who at once declared that he should not hazard his health for all the nuts and lemons in the world. Dr. Dilly was consulted, and at his recommendation Christopher was removed from his distasteful employment to the office of Messrs. Bounds Brothers, hop merchants, High Street, Borough. His stay there, too, was brief; for the narcotic influence of the hops induced drowsiness, and he was often caught napping at his desk. Moreover, it had been proved that he was not much more useful when awake than when asleep; and the admonitions of the chief clerk had failed to counteract the somnolent influence of the office air. He was advised to resign his post, which he did accordingly; and sought solace in his humiliation from the ever ready sympathy of his doting mother and his soft-hearted sister, Sophy, who, of course, believed that Messrs. Bounds Brothers and their senior clerk were refined savages.

A month at Margate restored Christopher's ruffled spirits, and soon after his return to London he entered the office of Messrs. Whetstone and Wrubb, solicitors, of Cannon Street, on

trial, prior to being articulated for five years. But before his probationary term had expired, he had resolved not to devote his life to the law, for various cogent reasons. In the first place, he disliked Mr. Wrubb, who was rough and overbearing, and had not the smallest sympathy for his frequent nervous ailments. Then his little back office was as grimy as a gravedigger's tool house, and was over-run with rats and big spiders. Old Mrs. Scrubb, too, the office-keeper, who lived in the underground kitchen, usually dined off red herrings or black puddings, and the greasy fumes from her gridiron ascended the staircase and gave him daily attacks of sick headache. Then the law-books which he was supposed to be reading up were intolerably dry and stupid, compared with the racy works of his favourite authors, and were terribly productive of nightmare. Chitty had no more charms for him than a Chinese song-book. Blackstone was a bore. Coke, Puffendorf, Grotius, and other ponderous tomes, full of legal lore, which loaded the shelves of the office library, were less interesting to him as studies than the tombstones in Streatham churchyard. A sensational story, with plenty of ghosts and goblins in it, was far more welcome to him than astute works on jurisprudence, and Gulliver's Travels were, in his opinion, immeasurably preferable to all Lord Bacon's profound philosophy. As for his classics, he loathed them more than he did castor-oil, or senna-tea, and instead of diligently laying a solid foundation of useful knowledge, and grinding his wayward mind into the discipline necessary to fit him to play a manly part in the important concerns of life, he frittered away his time in desultory crotchets, which only tended to enervate the nobler faculties of his nature, and to strengthen his taste for those emasculating follies which too many youths of his age are dangerously prone to.

Christopher's objections to the legal profession were held to be quite valid by his mother and sister; and his father—who was as easily turned as a sleeping turtle—was soon won over to their opinion; so Whetstone and Wrubb lost their clerk, and with him their hope of a high premium.

The dear boy was next induced to try how he liked his father's business; but the odour of fish at Billingsgate was insufferable to his sensitive olfactory nerves, and after his first day's work in that slimy region he returned home, looking as chopfallen as a newly-caught cod-fish. The vernacular of the basket-bearing fish fags of the market, too, shocked his ears worse than steam-whistles or bag-pipes; so after three days'

severe trial he again appealed to his mother to rescue him from an occupation which was much more distasteful to him than any he had previously tried. His father calmly listened to all his mother's objections, then remarked, in his usual easy manner, "Well, my dear, I don't want Kit to be a fishmonger if he has any objection to the trade, and we shall not miss him in the office if he never goes there again. But I certainly think it is time for him to begin to learn something useful, if only for the sake of keeping him out of mischief. Though he may never have to earn his livelihood, as I have had to do, steady employment of some sort is as necessary for him as exercise is for our old coach-horse, in order to keep him from kicking up his heels or running away. Depend upon it, Sally, if Kit spends the best of his days in mooning about with his hands in his pockets, he will be shaping himself into a tool for sharpers to make use of by and bye. So take care you don't coddle him too much, or you will perhaps fret yourself into your coffin for your pains, as hundreds of foolishly fond mothers have done. I would strongly advise him to make up his mind to some healthful pursuit, or he will soon become a trouble to himself, and as useless to the world as a rotten sieve or a fire balloon."

For two or three months Christopher lived totally free from the thralldom of business in the quiet seclusion of Turtleshell Lodge, and the society of his mother and sister and a small circle of friends in that select neighbourhood. In the mean time he was calmly considering over the choice of a profession, having abjured all idea of mercantile pursuits. But difficulties again beset him on every hand more than his feeble will could surmount. He had peeped into law, and was as much opposed to it as a poacher. Physic had been his abomination ever since he first tasted green gooseberries, and he was sure he had not nerve enough for a surgeon. He could no more amputate a limb or even tie an artery than he could hang his father; beside, hard study of any kind did not agree with his delicate constitution; he had already proved that it spoiled his digestion, and made him as dreary as a muzzled bear; indeed, Dr. Dilly had specially cautioned him against close confinement or sedentary occupation.

Christopher had seen sea-fights at the Surrey theatre, and had witnessed a review in Hyde Park; moreover he had had several long gossips with a one-armed pensioner in Greenwich Park, and was therefrom led to believe that an appointment in

the Marines might suit him. But unluckily for his hopes the Crimean war was raging at that time, and such appalling casualties were recorded from time to time in the newspapers, and such sickening details of cutting and maiming, that his mother might have been as easily persuaded to apprentice him to Van Amburgh, the lion-tamer, or to Sustac, the Hindoo snake-charmer, as to resign him to the Queen's service as a sea-soldier in such perilous times as these.

His way being apparently barred, for the time being, to the only honourable profession which he could bring his mind to choose, he resolved to wait patiently until the barrier was removed; to live in hope of a termination to the war, when he thought his mother would not object to spare him for a soldier. There could be very little personal risk, he reasoned, in time of peace, and a roving life in regimentals was flattering to his taste. He might not object to a little fighting, after he had got used to it; but the idea of going at once into active service as a raw recruit, never having even fired off a pistol, he could not calmly contemplate. He had a fitful desire for martial glory; and martial music had always made him caper when he was a baby; but he shuddered at the sight of great guns with balls in them, and he had a perfect horror of wooden legs, and such like incidentals.

His father chuckled when his opinion was asked on the subject, and drily remarked, that "Kit was no more fit for a marine than his sister Sophy was."

That opinion, however, did not stifle Christopher's military predilections; but he resolved to await the termination of the war, before he said any more on the subject. He had consequently pretty much leisure, and, being liberally supplied with pocket-money, it is not surprising that he should be easily tempted to launch out into the world further than his good parents would have approved, had they been cognisant of the extent of his ventures amongst life's eddies and whirlpools. When he spoke of his frequent visits to the *public* buildings of London, they innocently applauded his thirst for useful knowledge, little thinking that the public buildings which he frequented were more commonly called "Coal Holes" and "Cider Cellars." It is but fair to say, however, that he was but a novice in the mysteries of such establishments.

One of Christopher's newly-found associates was Launcelot Whiffin, a young student at Guy's Hospital, who had lodgings in Maze Pond, and went once a week to his paternal home, which

was not far from Turtlesell Lodge. Through him, Christopher gained introductions to several other medical students, who often paid nocturnal visits to Launcelot's lodgings; and gloried in spoiling the slumbers of the quiet denizens of Maze Pond, with that uproarious revelry for which gentlemen of their class have obtained such a world-wide notoriety.

At one of these select *soirées*, which Christopher soon learned to appreciate, there was present an over-dressed, swaggering young man, with jewellery enough about his person to stock a pedlar. In his gaudy cravat was a large pin, representing a gold-digger, with his right foot on a cradle, and holding a pick-axe in one hand, and a shovel in the other; on his hands were several rings, set with rough quartz nuggets; and a golden wheelbarrow hung from a massive chain, to which was affixed a costly gold watch. This person, who smilingly acknowledged the familiar *sobriquet* of "Lucky Sam," had recently returned to London, from Melbourne, by the steam ship "Great Britain;" and was believed to have brought more gold-dust with him than a ticket-porter could carry to the bank.

Of course Lucky Sam was the lion of the party; and, as they sat amidst the comforting fumes of hot punch and tobacco smoke, he astounded them with recitals of his numerous adventures, some of which were almost as marvellous as the exploits of "Jack and the bean-stalk." To hear him tell how he had dug up nuggets like kidney potatoes, or cradled out a matchboxfull of dust in less time than it would take a dry nurse to rock a cross baby to sleep; and how he had seen monster nuggets brought to light and fortunes made in a lucky forenoon, could scarcely fail to excite mercenary longings in the minds of some of the needy young students; and when young Ben Bladders exclaimed, "My skulls!" in a sudden outburst of enthusiasm, it was plain that he merely vented forth a little of the pent-up rapture which inflated the whole party. The idea of lucky diggers lighting their pipes with pound notes, and drinking champagne out of buckets and tubs, was the very acme of "brickish" spirit and rollicking luxury; and their occasionally "knocking down" their nuggets, dust, tents, tools, and "swag," complete, in one night's "spree," was glorious fun, which made the poor students' favourite nocturnal frolic of "knocker-wrenching" seem as tame as a game at dumps.

Then Lucky Sam spoke of the run over from Melbourne to London as carelessly as his cockney audience would talk of a voyage to Cork. Fifteen thousand miles, he said, was a mere

kangaroo's jump in the eyes of an Australian: a nice little pleasure trip, with nothing to do all the way but eat four or five meals a day, smoke and drink; play at deck quoits, and chaff the sea-sick passengers. He was going back to the diggings as soon as he had scattered his dust, and had seen all that was worth looking at in that hazy hemisphere. In his opinion none but paupers, prisoners, cripples, and fools, would stay on a foggy little island, not much bigger than an Australian squattage, and pass their lives penned up like calves in a stock-yard; treading on each other's toes for want of room, and grudging each other their short allowance of rations. All the spirited fellows in the world, he said, found their way to Australia; and, for his part, he would not stay in the old country if they offered to make him Bishop of London, or Lord Chancellor of England.

"I suppose there are some good openings for capitalists in Australia?" asked Christopher, in his usual hesitating way, as soon as Sam had stopped to draw breath, after his exciting rhapsody.

"I believe you," replied Sam, with a knowing nod, and slightly winking his left eye, "plenty of openings besides the deep mining shafts, which you have to look out for on dark nights. I'll just give you an example. Two mates of mine left Ballarat the beginning of last year with nine hundred and forty ounces of dust, and a nice little nugget, about the size of that gin bottle. They started for Sydney in the 'Wonga Wonga,' went straight up the Hunter River, and bought store cattle at a pound a head. Then they hired a lot of stockmen, and drove their purchases overland to Melbourne, and sold them all at seven pounds a head. What do you think of that for an opening? Those fellows made their fortunes right off by that lucky stroke, and made hundreds of friends too, who rushed up from all quarters, to congratulate them, and drink their health. They soon afterwards got married, of course, and now they live at Woolloomooloo in style, and have nothing to do but sport about with their wives, and spend their money, like thoroughbred gentlefolks."

"Bless me!" exclaimed Christopher, opening his eyes and mouth, like a hungry beggar staring through a baker's window, "that's just the way I should like to go to work, to make a fortune without much fuss. But do you think, Sir, that a person might make a similar fortunate hit just now? I mean as regards the

money, not the wife; for instance, could I easily invest a few thousands to bring me in something, do you think?"

"Not the least doubt of it," replied Sam with energy; "I guess you are just the sort of chap as could do it too. If not in the identical shape that I have just been putting it, there are scores of other ways that you may invest capital, as easily as pulling on your stockings. For example, I knew a man who built a large house, and occupied it two or three years, then sold it for nearly five thousand pounds more than it cost him, and got paid for it, too, in bran new sovereigns. So you see that old saw about 'fools building houses,' &c., does not cut in that new country."

"My goodness! that was an astonishing stroke of luck," said Christopher, opening his eyes wider than before. "I should be much obliged to you, Sir, if"—

"Pooh! that's merely a mosquito bite," interrupted Sam: "I knew some parties who sold a small corner block of land, which I believe cost them nothing, for forty-five thousand pounds!"

"Bones and sinews!" shrieked all the electrified students in concert. "You don't mean to say that's true?"

"Fact, I assure you, gentlemen," said Sam solemnly; "and I could give you scores of other startling examples of rapid 'pile-driving,' or fortune-building, if you want them. I have seen hundreds of poor beggars suddenly turned into squires, by a few lucky rocks of the cradle, or a few dashing ventures into the share market; and I have seen a fellow go raving mad with joy, and lie down and hug a nugget which he had just struck with his pickaxe, but which he hadn't strength to lift. But it would take me a fortnight to spin you all the yarns I know, and then you would not believe half of them."

"I tell you again, Mr. Cockle," continued Sam, after he had refreshed himself with a glass of punch, "and I'll maintain what I say, there is not a country on the face of the globe where a man of spirit can invest his capital more easily; and if I were in Melbourne, I could soon find hundreds of speculators who would swear to that fact. Then there is such a variety of things for a man to try his hand at in that great land, that's the best of it: he need not drudge away for forty years at one humdrum trade, in order to call himself an independent man; not a bit of it; if he does not like one thing, he can sell off and try something else; and there is no need to serve apprenticeship there unless you like. For instance, I've seen a college-

bred man selling mutton, and lots of real gentlemen keeping stores, and their *wives* helping them.

"When I get back to the diggings, I intend to work away for a few months, and as soon as I have scraped up as much dust as I want, I think I shall go right into sheep farming, then get married and settle down into a rational being. There are plenty of stations to be bought or taken up to the northward and westward, and after all, perhaps, sheep-farming is most profitable in the long run: at all events it is an easy quiet sort of life, and the most aristocratic calling in the country. I have known lots of men to make immense fortunes at sheep-farming, and I mean to try my luck at it."

"But is there not danger to be apprehended from wild beasts and cannibal natives in the wilderness, or bush, as you call it?" asked Christopher.

"Pooh, pooh!" sneered Sam. "There are no wild beasts in that land, mate; at any rate there are none that will bite a fellow. There are plenty of kangaroos and such like game, and famous sport it is to hunt them, and prime turtle soup you can make out of their tails. As for the black fellows, poor beggars! they are fast dying before the advance of civilization, like sheep when the catarrh gets into the flock; for there are many influences at work thinning their numbers, which I have not time to talk about at present. However, there is not much to be dreaded from the blacks, if they are properly managed; the whites are likely to do you a plaguey deal more mischief if you don't look sharp about you. Put that down for a fact.

"Then there are no hard frosts in that land to nip a man's toes off if he stirs outside his hut; and he need not sit with his nose up the chimney half the year, as folks are obliged to do in England. There are no game laws to spoil a fellow's sport, no income tax, no tithes, no mad dogs, and no militia. There we have manhood suffrage and vote by ballot, beside a host of other privileges, which I cannot remember to-night. There, Jack the stockman is as independent as his master, and sometimes a precious deal more so, as many masters would ruefully confess. The native youths—the white ones I mean—are nearly all six feet high, and the girls are—blessed if I know what to say good enough for them—they are angels in disguise, I think. In short, measure it which way you will, it's the grandest country under the sun, and that's a tremendous fact!" added Lucky Sam, emphasizing his assertion by striking the table with his huge fist, and making a pauper's skull, filled

with shag tobacco, bound to the floor. "And now, my bucks ! fill up another bumper of punch, and join me in shouting, 'Advance, Australia !' till you are all as black in the face as the statue of old Governor Guy, in the hospital quadrangle."

Lucky Sam's eloquence had such an exciting effect upon Christopher, that all his fondled desires for military glory melted like sugar-plums, and a passion for emigration took complete possession of his brain, both by day and by night too. His sister, Sophy, who slept in an adjoining room, was frequently startled from her nocturnal slumbers, by his loud shouts of, "Advance, Australia !" In fact, his mind was fully bent upon advancing that great land, and his own fortune at the same time, by collecting as much capital as he possibly could, and going to Sydney to invest it.

CHAPTER III.

DESCRIBES Alderman Cockle, Mrs. Cockle, and their Daughter Sophy; and relates an important Discussion on the Subject of Christopher's contemplated Visit to Australia.

THE numerous charming villas of Streatham and Tooting were slowly fading into the dusky twilight of a calm evening in the autumn of 1854, as a hooded phaeton, drawn by a well-fed brown horse, and driven by a sedate-looking servant in mouldy green livery, leisurely jogged through an avenue of elm trees to the gates of Turtlesell Lodge.

Seated inside the hood, reading the latest number of "Punch," was an elderly gentleman with bald head and a face radiant as a sunflower; which clearly indicated by its placidity, and the absence of care-bred ruffles, that its owner was blessed with bodily ease, and that his mind was not racked with anxiety about doubtful speculations, or bills payable. This pleasing old picture, in a somewhat rough and bulky frame, I beg to present to the reader as Alderman Cockle, twenty years older than he was when I first noticed him; beside being a grade higher in civic dignity.

Very soon the vehicle stopped at the door of a commodious red-brick mansion; when Mrs. Cockle, a portly dame, with silvery hair and a soft voice, hastened down the steps, and warmly welcomed her beloved spouse, whose non-arrival two hours before she had been anxiously concerned about; for he was usually as punctual as the sun-dial on the front lawn.

"Why, Noah, dear! whatever has kept you so late to-day?" asked Mrs. Cockle, as she escorted him from the carriage to his easy chair in the dining-room. "I have been fancying that old Brownie had shaken his blinkers off and run away, or that the wheel of the phaeton had come off again, or that poor Rakes had tumbled off the box in a fit. You can't think how uneasy I have been about you; for I felt sure something dreadful had happened."

"Oh, that's just like you, ducky; you are all kindness and caution," said Mr. Cockle, with a smile, after he had fondly

embraced his wife. "But what a pity it is you did not take a hopeful, instead of a doubtful, view of the matter! you might have spared your dear little heart two hours of anxiety. Now, I never can see the wisdom of grieving oneself about disasters which may never come at all—running to meet misery, as it were. I rather like to cheer up, and try to find reasons for hoping that trouble will pass me by. That's the best way, I think; for if the worst should come, there is time enough to fret about it when we feel it; even then, I doubt if it would be wise to fret, for it is the very worst way of getting rid of difficulties: in fact, it doubles your trouble when you trouble yourself about it. There is a little bit of wholesome philosophy for you, Sally, and you can study it at your leisure. Here am I, you see, as free from fractures as your best china tea-service; I have neither been upset nor run away with, and old Rakes has not had a fit to-day: so you have been making yourself sad again without reason, bless your little foolish fluttering heart. But I will tell you the cause of my detention, which is not a very serious affair, so don't be alarmed, ducky!

"The 'Flat Flounder,' laden with shell-fish, was being tugged up the river, and when abreast of Erith, she was run down by a Gravesend steamer. But the crew of the smack are all safe, thank God, and the cargo will not damage by wet. I hope to raise the smack in a day or two; and I suppose the owners of the steamer will pay all expenses. That is the sum and substance of the matter. Where is Sophy, my love?"

"She and Christopher are taking tea at Whiffin's; but they said they would be home early. Put your slippers on, dear, and draw your chair to the table. I am so pleased you have come home safe and sound." Mrs. Cockle then seated herself before the tea-tray, and began to pour out the fragrant pekoe; while her rosy face, round as a muffin, reflected on the silver teapot the image of loving-kindness and gentleness.

It is necessary for the reader to know a little more of the history of this affectionate old pair; but as many persons will be introduced as I proceed, I shall in each case be as concise as is compatible with the interest of my story, to leave space for the numberless incidents I have to narrate.

Mr. Cockle had begun business about forty years before as a retailer of shell-fish. His entire capital was at first invested in a wheelbarrow, a basket, a bushel of periwinkles, and an honest pint pot; but, by dint of untiring industry and upright dealing, he had gradually acquired wealth and honour. He was the

owner of several fishing vessels, and a long row of houses at Hackney, besides a considerable sum of money in the "three and a half consols." He continued in business more for the sake of occupation, than from love of accumulating money; for he applied a large proportion of his gains to charitable objects, and very often gave a struggling young man a start in the world. Petty troubles seemed always to flee from his presence like mist before the rising sun; and his merry face and cheering words have often re-kindled hope in a desponding heart. "Kind words are cheap enough," he used to say; "and if a little money will help a poor mortal out of trouble, give it him, for pity's sake." Alderman Cockle was as well known in certain parts of the city as Aldgate pump, and he was generally respected; for to both rich and poor his manner was alike kind, courteous, and free from pompous pride. His educational acquirements were very limited; for he had to leave school and earn his livelihood at an early age. His knowledge of the world, too, was circumscribed, having never been a greater distance than one hundred miles from Billingsgate. He had always avoided speculations, and had grown rich by steadily minding his own business, and not meddling with things which he did not understand. Those maxims which he had found so useful, he strongly recommended to all young tradesmen.

His wife and he were born and bred in the same street, and had been taught in the same school at Shadwell by old Dame Tiller, whose husband was one of the eight hundred sailors who found a watery grave in the sinking of the ill-fated "Royal George," at Spithead—that dire catastrophe, which filled the British isles with lamentation in June, 1782. Mr. and Mrs. Cockle had lived and loved together for more than thirty years, and had had five children: the two eldest only survived.

Mrs. Cockle's heart was brimful of sympathy and benevolence: she loved her home, her husband, and her children; and although she was perhaps too indulgent to the latter, they dutifully reciprocated her fondness. She lacked the hopeful spirit and robust mind of her husband, and was rather fussy and subject to nervous fancies and fears where no real causes existed. Thus she often gave herself and her family needless anxiety; this they, however, patiently bore, for they appreciated her amiable qualities, which manifested themselves in deeds more than in words.

As Mr. Cockle handed up his cup to be filled the third time, he observed an ominous gloom gathering on his wife's countenance,

when he quietly asked, "What is veiling the sunshine from your bonny brow, Sally? Any fresh trouble, or is it merely some old fancy come to tease you? Tell me your sorrow, and if I cannot scare it away, I will share it with you. Halves! as the boys cry out, when they pick up a prize."

"I was thinking just then of our dear boy," replied Mrs. Cockle, while tears filled her eyes. "I fear his mind is thoroughly set upon going to Australia, notwithstanding all we said to him on Monday night to induce him to stay at home contentedly. I wish that gold-digging friend of young Whiffin's had kept down in the dusty hole that he talks so much about, instead of coming to this land to fill our boy's head with extravagant fancies for nuggets and nonsense that he had never dreamt of before. For the last ten days he has been constantly talking of lucky speculations and extraordinary investments in houses, and begging me to let him go abroad and try his fortune; so that I have been almost worried out of my wits with him."

"If that be the case, my dear, it is clear that the sooner he goes the better it will be for your comfort and peace; so I seriously advise you not to stop him," said Mr. Cockle. "Of course, I would rather see him settle down to some suitable occupation in England, and so I have told him; but he does not seem able to fix his mind on any definite pursuit, and I do not think it would be wise to force him to it. Beside, I feel rather proud to see him evince a desire to push out into the world, for it proves that he has spirit and enterprise. Who knows what bright fortune is in store for Kit? With his good schooling and careful home-training, he may become a wonderful man,—a sort of electrical light to illumine the world! How many young fellows have we read of, who while they remained under their native roof had no more shine in them than rusty shovels; but after launching away from home influences, they have displayed sparkling talents, which have enlightened mankind, and earned for themselves pages in the annals of great and good men! If I had heard of gold in 'hundredweight nuggets' when I was a youth, do you think I should have stayed in London, crying, 'Pickled eels and periwinkles?' Not I, indeed! Odds bobs! I should have sold my stock-in-trade and plant to the first bidder, and worked my passage to the land where the gold was to be picked up, even if it had been close to the south pole. I don't blame the boy a bit for his desires; indeed it is a relief to me that his mind is at length fixed

upon some definite course ; and my advice to you, Sally, is, to let him be off at once."

"But, my dear Noah ! the poor fellow has never been more than fifteen miles from home in his lifetime without myself or Sophy . and to be fifteen thousand miles away, in a barely civilized land, and all alone too, he would fret himself into a fever, I am certain. I know his nervous, sensitive temperament better than you do, Noah, for I have precisely the same feelings : beside, I have had all the responsibility of training him, as you admit, so I ought to know his peculiarities ; and I tell you, dear, he is no more fit to battle with the rough world than a baby in long clothes. Only fancy for a moment, if he were taken ill, poor child, with cholera or yellow fever, or some other of those dreadful maladies which are always lurking in foreign lands, who would nurse him ? Would he find a mother and sister at the other side of the world, where everything is topsy-turvy, where everybody is scrambling for gold-dust, and folks are too busy to care for themselves, much less for their neighbours, and where real home comforts, I am told, are scarcely to be procured for love or money ? I am sure he would die with grief, poor dear boy."

"Fiddle, Sally ! die with grief indeed ! not he, I'll wager my wig ; there is too much of the Cockle in him for that. He would feel his self-dependence, and begin to be a man ; that is my hope, and belief too. He will shake off all his girlish nonsense as soon as he is out of your leading-strings. But I can see plainly enough that if he stays at home much longer, with your coddling and Sophy's petting, he will grow up as sappy as a sugar-cane, and fit for nothing but to dawdle his life away in a drawing-room, or to parade the streets in mild weather, dressed up like a tailor's dummy, in company with other lazy, lisping dandies. Pshaw ! I would rather see him hawking mackerel or hot pies.

"You know, Sally, we should not send him as a beggar," continued Mr. Cockle softly. "We have plenty to spare, thank God ! and depend upon it that money in his purse will prove a very good substitute for friends, as the world goes now-a-days. He will not die for want of sympathy, so long as his banker looks complacently on him. Besides, my brother Nick is out in that country somewhere ; and although circumstances, which I need not allude to, have estranged us for many years, I am sure Nick has the heart of a Cockle still, if he be alive. I will try to find his whereabouts ; and he will be very glad to see Kit, for

my sake. He has a wife, I know, and perhaps he has daughters too; if so, I dare say they will give our boy as much petting as will be necessary to save him from dying. Cousins are sometimes quite as tender as sisters, as I can very feelingly certify."

"O dear me! how you talk, Noah! a stranger might reasonably doubt if you really loved Christopher," said Mrs. Cockle, with a piteous whine. "The idea of sending a delicate child to the end of the earth in search of a relative whom you have not seen for thirty years, and of whose position you are entirely ignorant, quite shocks me. I often envy you your sanguine spirit; but really, love, you sadly lack caution sometimes. Cousins, indeed! he may be devoured by them, poor boy! I do not want to suggest dangers; but it certainly behoves us to be careful of our only son. Now we do not know what Nick's children are like, if he has any; they may be running about wild in the woods, like little copper-coloured what-you-may-call-ems, for aught we know. Pretty creatures they would be to pet our boy, would they not? We casually heard, many years ago, that your brother was married to a native of Australia, and that is all we know. Now, though I freely admit that many coloured women are very beautiful and accomplished too, still the Australians are——"

"Ha, ha, ha!" laughed Mr. Cockle: "Bless your innocent heart, Sally; don't be vexed with me for laughing; but I couldn't help it if it would damage your reputation. Any one would suppose that you had lived all your days with grandmother, on 'Goose Green,' and had never learnt anything but the way to knit worsted stockings and make yeast dumplings. Why, there are thousands of Australian ladies as fair as snow-drops, and as gentle as dear Sophy or yourself. That is not a savage land *now*, whatever it may have been in former years; and it is doubtless destined to become a great empire. I grant you that many coloured ladies are highly cultivated and handsome too; but not so the poor Australian aborigines, who, from all I can learn, are sadly behind in the race of civilization and the very reverse of charming. Nick's taste must have wonderfully changed if he has married a black native; but I don't encourage such a thought for a moment, while there is good reason for me to hope that he may have been lucky enough to find such another loving creature as yourself; for there are thousands of respectable European families in that land."

The entrance of Christopher and his sister put a stop to the

colloquy for a time. After affectionately saluting their parents, they seated themselves side by side on a sofa.

"Well, Kit, my boy; have you been collecting more information about Australia?" asked Mr. Cockle.

"Yes, father," replied Christopher, as he excitedly drew his tablets from his breast pocket; "I have gathered a lot of surprising statistics of sheep and cattle, bank returns, Mining and other Joint Stock Companies' operations; besides a variety of information about land laws, squatters' rights, tariffs, and other interesting matter, all of which I mean to study carefully. Part of my data I have called from books, but perhaps the most valuable part I have learned from Mr. Shicer."

"Pray who is Mr. Shicer?" asked Mr. Cockle, while he smilingly glanced over his son's tablets.

"He is a gentleman recently returned from Melbourne, father, with an immense amount of gold, which he gathered at the diggings in a very short time. He is a shrewd, clever man, father, and has taken quite a fancy to me. He has promised to show me half a dozen plans for making a rapid fortune, and he has had several years' 'colonial experience,' as he calls it."

"But have you any proof of his respectability, my boy? Who knows him?—where did you first meet with him?—what are his antecedents?"

"Launcelot Whiffin knew a little of him before he went to Australia at first, father; and I believe he then belonged to the medical profession. I first met with him at Launcelot's lodgings, in company with several other medical gentlemen."

"Lizzie Whiffin dislikes him very much, and is vexed with her brother for taking him to their house," said Sophy, warmly; "she says he is a vulgar, forward young man, not fit for the society of ladies or of gentlemen either. He talks 'slang' in the drawing-room, and delights in being called 'Lucky Sam.' Some of Launcelot's fellow students tolerate him, they say, because they are desirous of hearing all about the gold fields abroad; but Lizzie says it is because he is supposed to have a good deal of gold-dust in his pockets. She further told me, in confidence, that before he went to Australia he was only a bottlewasher, or something of the sort, in a wholesale drug warehouse."

"Humph! He is certainly not very high up in the medical profession," said Mr. Cockle, drily. "It may not be true, though, and it is not wise to believe flying rumours; but if it were true, it would not prejudice me against the man if he were

otherwise reputable : for, however humble a man's origin, or his calling, if he be honest, he can claim the respect due to his station in life. It is well to be cautious, though, and without actually condemning your new friend, Kit, I may give you a little advice for general application.

"Hearken, then, my boy. Don't credit all that you hear and see every day ; for things are not always what they appear to be. Many brass watches have been sold as gold ones : many boasting beggars have passed for men of substance, and many scheming rogues have assumed the guise of honest men. I don't tell you to look at every person you meet with suspicion, or to cram your ears with wool ; neither do I want to scare you into the belief that your path is beset with man-traps, spring guns, and podge-holes ; but I would urge you always to reflect well and make good use of your judgment, to put your mathematical knowledge to practical purpose, and, above all, well exercise your common sense. Perhaps no trade teaches the importance of keen scrutiny into things better than mine does ; for if I were, as a rule, to take things as they are represented to be, without carefully proving that they are sound and good, some of my customers would get very high-flavoured fish occasionally. Better to look at a thing well before you touch it, as the dredger's boy said when his father told him to catch hold of a live lobster ; so you had better look well and think long before you adopt any of the plausible plans of this Mr. Shicer, or of any other person with whom you have had such slight acquaintance, or you may get very severely bitten for your want of judgment.

"Now that's enough advice on the subject for the present, Kit, and you can reflect upon it. I don't like to cram too many old maxims into a young heart all at once ; for mental aliment is mere lumber unless it be well digested, and even good things become nauseous when they are not timely, as Sophy said the morning after her hearty supper of stewed mussels and melted butter, at Margate."

It would be tedious to relate even a tithe of what was said in that social circle upon the momentous question of Christopher's contemplated tour, or to depict the many sorrowful scenes in which his mother and sister were the principal performers ; melting seasons which at one time almost subdued his roving desires, and affixed him, like the old Tom cat, to the family hearth for life. But the soft impressions were soon

effaced by the glowing desires which Mr. Shicer's eloquence had awakened ; and the renewal of his pathetic whine, " Do let me go, Ma ! " proved that a passion for adventure predominated over his love for his home. When answered by the tearful looks and sorrowful objections of his mother and sister, he would thrust his hands into his pockets and wander about the shrubbery, looking as sulky as a water-spaniel shut up in a dust bin, until they began to fear the poor boy would pine himself into bad health. At the end of a week he got permission to go, for a short season only : and his friends began to make arrangements for his outfit with reluctant zeal, as if they were preparing deep mourning.

CHAPTER IV.

CONTAINS various important Matters relative to the Choice of a Ship, with the Determination of the Family to send Christopher to Australia in the "Calabash." Tim Rafferty is introduced.

"FOR Melbourne direct, the fine A 1 clipper ship, 'Lightning,' Captain Flash, with quick despatch," quoted Christopher, from the "Times" of the 10th of October, as he sat with his mother and sister in the breakfast-parlour at Turtlesnell Lodge, a few days after the decision which I have noted in the preceding chapter.

"I can never consent to your going in that vessel, my dear," said Mrs. Cockle, emphatically; "I have always had a perfect horror of lightning, and thunder too; and I am sure I should not sleep a wink after you went away, fearing you would be struck to the bottom of the sea. I think it is dreadfully presumptuous for captains to give such awful names to their ships to induce silly folks to believe they are so wonderfully fast. It is really grievous, when you come to think of it, how wicked the world is now-a-days, and what men will say and do to make money. I quite shudder at it. See if there is any other vessel going, my dear. Lightning is a fearful thing to trifle with."

"Here's another, Ma,—'the fine fast-sailing frigate-built ship, 'Oakley Castle,' Goliah Tuff, Commander, will sail'——"

"It strikes me very forcibly that that is a strong ship, Christopher," interrupted his mother; "and I like the captain's name, it sounds like 'the true British sailor' in the old song,—I forget what they call it just now. I wonder if they carry an experienced surgeon?"

"Ah, I see it will sail next week, Ma, so that will be too soon for us," drawled Christopher. "I am sorry for that, arn't you, Sophy? But, stay,—what's this one? My stars, Ma! here is something wonderfully uncommon: 'The superb new paddle steam ship, 'Calabash,' 1,500 tons, Captain Toffey, will sail early in November. Carries first-class passengers only, and offers very superior accommodation. It is expected that this magnificent vessel will make the passage to Sydney in forty-

five days,' etc., etc., etc. That's the ship to my fancy, Ma ; what do you think of it ? ”

“ It has a very funny name, my dear, but by no means a presumptuous one ; and the Captain's name does not suggest unpleasant ideas of rough ‘jack tars,’ smelling of pitch and oakum. It is a bran-new vessel, it seems, so it must be clean and strong ; and as it carries only first-class passengers, you will have the advantage of refined society. I like the idea of your going in a steamer too, because they always go much faster than sailing vessels, as we have often remarked on the Thames. Besides, when the weather is cold and damp, I dare say the captain will allow you to sit by the engine fire, which is an important consideration, as you suffer so much from chapped hands and chilblains in the winter season. I really think, my dear, if they will promise to carry you there in forty-five days, we might go : but, stay ! perhaps we had better not decide until we hear what Pa says about it when he comes home. He knows a good deal about nautical matters ; and as neither you, nor I, nor Sophy, have ever been in a vessel, except the Margate packet, and now and then in the little ‘Ramjam,’ from Waterloo Bridge to Kew, our judgment may be defective.”

A rather lengthy discussion ensued ; but after many *pros* and *cons*, and not a few tears and sobs, it was decided that Christopher should pay a visit of inspection to the “Calabash” that morning, and bring his report for the further consideration of the family at tea time.

Two hours afterward, he alighted from a first-class carriage, at the railway terminus, Blackwall, and took the cleanest road to Mr. Scott Russell's iron-shipbuilding yard. Soon he was threading his way in gaping astonishment through mazes of iron, in various shapes, from old rusty rivets to the massive keel and ribs of the “Great Eastern,” which was then and there in construction. A peculiar sensation stole over Christopher's heart ; and he hastened through the yard as if he were exposed to the shots of contending armies, while puffing engines, roaring blasts, steam-hammers, and hand-hammers innumerable, created such a clatter that, when he got into a waterman's boat, he was both surprised and grateful to find that he had not been struck stone deaf, as well as temporarily stupid, by the extraordinary combinations of noise, bustle, and flying sparks.

A few yards from the shore lay a long, rakish-looking steamship, with two masts and two funnels, with colours gaily flutter-

ing on the former. Over her gracefully projecting bow was written, in gold letters, "Calabash." The waterman stopped his boat for a minute or two at Christopher's request, while he gazed admiringly at the figure-head, which represented a flying angel holding a myrtle-branch in one hand and a nugget in the other.

"Can I see Captain Toffey, if you please, Sir?" asked Christopher of a smartly dressed midshipman, who raised his cap as he received his visitor at the gangway, and directed him to a portly old gentleman in an undress uniform, who was leisurely walking the quarter-deck, looking as pleased and placid as if he had all that his heart desired, and was an utter stranger to anxious care, and loved everybody in the world as much as he loved himself.

"I have taken the liberty of calling, Sir, to ask what you will charge to convey me to Australia," said Christopher, meekly, after he had exchanged salutations with the benignant-looking Captain.

"Well, Sir—hem! I think you had better see my agents about the terms," replied Captain Toffey, in a mild, deliberate tone. "But I shall be very happy to show you our accommodations, if you wish to see them. Please to step this way. Keep your hat on, Sir; you may feel a draught in the companion-way."

Christopher followed down a wide stairway, into a spacious saloon, fitted up with such gorgeous luxury that he almost fancied he had made a mistake, and got on board the Queen's yacht. There were chastely carved sideboards and tables, velvet-covered seats and sofas, mirrors in abundance, and richly painted panelling, representing Naiads bathing in most romantic-looking brooks, or drying themselves on the green mossy banks. Then there were maplewood and satinwood highly polished, and common wood covered with gold or pretty paint; while brass everywhere abounded. Then there were Italian marble pilasters at the doorways of the state-rooms, and a gold clock on the stern-post. In short, there seemed to be nothing lacking which taste or extravagance could suggest, or find an excuse for, or find a nook or corner for without any excuse at all.

Descending another stairway, they entered the lower saloon, as spacious, though far less gaudy, than the one above. From thence they proceeded to the engine-room, where Christopher was shown the complicated machinery and the ponderous boilers, which filled him with awe; thence to the culinary department,

which inspired him with pleasing anticipation of future feasting. Captain Toffey calmly explained everything as they went along, without noticing his visitor's wonder-stricken face or his creeping diffidence, as though he were stealing a peep through the Grand Turk's tabooed apartments; and after taking him all over the ship, and back to the quarter-deck, kindly asked him to stop and take a plate of soup at one o'clock.

"Thank you, Sir, I would rather not. I am very much obliged to you, but Ma will wait dinner for me at the Lodge, and she will be uneasy if I am not home. I think I had better make haste back; but if you have no objection, Sir, I should very much like Ma and my sister, and perhaps Pa too, to come and see the ship to-morrow. I am sure they will be as much charmed with it, as I have been."

"Bring them on board by all means, Sir; I shall be very proud to see them," said Captain Toffey cordially. "By the way, perhaps, you had better see my agents soon, if you think of going with us, as the cabins are filling up very fast, and we have decided not to take more than seventy passengers, although, as you have observed, we shall have accommodation for more than two hundred when we get into our contemplated trade on the Australian coast."

The latter intimation, implying a possibility of his being cut off from the privilege of voyaging in such a floating palace, so excited our hero, that he somewhat abruptly bade adieu to the Captain; then shook hands with the midshipman at the gangway, and with the sailor who hailed the waterman for him; and hurried back to Tooting, like an excited young sire running for his mother-in-law.

"O my goodness, Ma, such a steamer! It far surpasses everything that I have ever seen or heard of. Most splendid! And such a size too! Astonishing! I do believe I could drive our carriage into the kitchen, or galley, as the Captain called it; and one of her big funnels would make a fine steeple for a little church."

These were Christopher's first excited exclamations when he dashed into the drawing-room on his return to Turtlesell Lodge.

"You will be enchanted when you see it, Ma; and you must go on board to-morrow, with Pa, and Sophy, and me; for the Captain has invited us all, and says he will be proud to see us. It is a bran new ship, Ma, and surprisingly strong. It is built of the best polished iron, and is painted and gilded inside as gorgeously as the Lord Mayor's coach. The Captain says there

is not a rat on board bigger than a mouse. But I must book myself directly, Ma, or they may not have room for me."

"Patience, my dear boy! don't be so excited," said his mother, soothingly. "You look heated and tired, my son; and I am afraid you will have nervous headache again to-night. Come and have your dinner, dear, and we will talk quietly about the ship over the dessert. We have a nice little tender chicken, and a gooseberry tart. Come along, my love."

"I don't want any dinner, Ma, thank you; I could not eat a morsel of the daintiest dish in London. I think I had better go into the City at once, and meet Pa, and go with him to the agent to secure my cabin. I am sure the ship will soon be full; everybody would want to sail in it, if they only saw it. You have no idea what it is like, Ma, or you would not like me to run a risk of losing my chance of going in it. The Captain is such a nice man too, speaks so gently, and looks as pleasant as if he were always sucking sugar-candy. I am sure he will never flog his passengers, Ma. The officers are all such handsome men, and even the smallest midshipman wears nearly as much gold on his jacket and cap as old daddy Stoakes, the Streatham beadle, has upon his Sunday coat. Then we shall carry a brass band and a milking cow; so we shall have plenty of milk and music too, and you know I am fond of both. There is an ice-house on board, and I observed a famous place to warm my feet, up against the cook's funnel. But I will tell you more to-night, Ma; I cannot think of half the grand things I have seen at present. Do, Ma, let me go at once and book myself; for if I am too late I shall grieve uncommonly."

"Nonsense, child! There is no need for such haste. They can surely find room for you and your baggage in such a big ship as that; and if they cannot do so, you can afford to wait for another favourable opportunity. I feel cut to the quick to see you so anxious to leave your happy home, and your fond parents and sister, who love you as dearly as our lives," sobbed poor Mrs. Cockle; while Sophy's fast-falling tears betokened her strong sympathy with her mother's pathetically expressed sentiments.

Those touching appeals sobered Christopher's excitement in a minute. Naturally as tender as a young rabbit, the mere shadow of a censure from those he loved so fondly was like a blow on the back of the neck to a sucking bunny. With sobbing protestations of never-dying affection, he flung himself into his mother's and sister's united embrace; and an hysterical

trio, with roaring variations, made the rafters of Turtleshell Lodge ring again. The wail was taken up by the servants in the kitchen, and had only just concluded when Mr. Cockle returned home at five o'clock.

The happy old Alderman could not fail to observe grimy traces of tears on the faces of his family, and, indeed, of every member of his household, including Bob, the stable-boy, who had had a cry on his own account after the cook basted him for laughing. When he had learned the cause of the general grief, Mr. Cockle began to administer comfort in his characteristic style, and to disperse the gloom which had enveloped the Lodge like a November fog. A long conference ensued, which it is not necessary to notice, farther than to say, that they resolved to pay a family visit to the "Calabash" the next day, to decide on the merits of the ship, and on the advisability of shipping their precious pet.

Soon after breakfast the following morning, old Rakes brought the phaeton to the front door, and took in Mr. and Mrs. Cockle, with Sophy and Christopher; then drove straightway to Deptford, where a boat was hired, and the whole party stood on the spacious flush deck of the "Calabash" just as the command was given to "strike seven bells." Christopher proudly whispered to his mother that he supposed the order was given to the ringers in honour of their arrival, and his mother whisperingly expressed her surprise at their having a peal of bells on board; while Sophy sucked the knob of her parasol in silent wonder at their ringing seven bells in precisely the same key.

Captain Toffey and some of his officers were on shore; but the third mate received the visitors politely, showed them over the ship, and patiently replied to their numberless inquiries. After a time, he was called to attend to some duty on deck, so he apologized for his absence, and left them to examine the grand saloon at their leisure, which was a great relief to them, as it removed the bar to the interchange of their overawed impressions.

"Goodness gracious me! This is a magnificent steamer indeed, and it must have cost a mint of money!" exclaimed Mrs. Cockle, at the same time seating herself on a crimson velvet sofa, and gazing about her with a sort of reverential admiration mixed with horror, like a half-tamed Fijian inside a church-organ. "I really never did see anything half so grand in all my life. It puts me in mind of the last sparkling scene in the pantomime of the 'Goose and the Golden Egg,' that we saw last Christmas. Deary, deary me!"

"There is such a lot of gold and gilding, it quite dazzles me, I declare," said Sophy.

"It shows how rich the people must be in Australia," chuckled Christopher, while his eyes glistened like half-sovereigns. "This vessel belongs to a few patriotic gentlemen over there, who have built her out of their loose pocket money, for the express purpose of carrying lucky diggers and their dust between Sydney and Melbourne, and eclipsing all the other steamers in the Southern world. Their motto is, 'Advance, Australia!' and a very praiseworthy motto too. There it is, written on the skylight above your heads. Can't you see it, Sophy? just above the picture of a goose-necked emu, and a kangaroo with his tail cocked up. They have the same motto engraved on all their spoons. This is the swiftest ship in the world, I am told, and has cost an immense sum of money; for no expense has been spared in making her worthy to carry lucky diggers. It is estimated she will pay for herself in no time. In fact," added Christopher, as a wind up to his excited eulogiums, "I was thinking perhaps Pa would like me to try and secure a few shares as an investment, if I can get them."

"Never be in a hurry to invest money in shares of any sort. Bear that in mind, my boy," said Mr. Cockle, who had been silently scrutinizing some of the ornamental parts of the saloon, and was at that moment winking both eyes at the marble columns and the water-nymphs, and evidently taking a practical view of these unnecessary decorations. "It is much easier to go into the share-market than it is to get clear out of it again, or to collect your dividends, sometimes. Put your hand into your pocket as deliberately as you would into a bagful of silver eels, unsanded. If you were not to do that very carefully, the slimy fish would slip out of the bag, and bite your fingers too. Money will play you similar tricks if you are not cautious. Think of these hints, Kit, when I am not near to remind you."

"Yes, father, I will attend to all your advice," said Christopher, hastily; then turning to his mother, he exclaimed, in a rapture: "My stars, Ma! isn't that a splendid sideboard? Wouldn't you like to have it at the Lodge?"

At that moment a comical-looking man, in a blue jacket, appeared at a doorway, and checked Mrs. Cockle's reply to the question. In a reverential whisper, she asked Christopher "if that was Captain Toffey?"

"No, Ma, it is not the Captain, I am sure; but it may be the

chief officer. I will ask him," said Christopher; then rising, and advancing towards the person, he said, in a humble tone, "Good morning, Sir."

The man returned the salutation very deferentially, and with a rich Hibernian idiom.

"Are you the chief mate, Sir?" asked Christopher.

"Troth, I wish I was, yer honour!" replied the man, with a broad grin. "Maybe I may git the berth by-an'-bye, but I'm on'y one o' the lower saloon stewards at prisint."

"Oh, the steward, are you?" said Christopher, in an altered tone.

"Yes, Sir: lasteways, I'm one ov the down-below bhoys: but it's all the same, Sir, as the Earrl ov Munster's flunkey sed to the gossoon who mistook him for his masther."

"What is your name, may I ask?"

"Tim Rafferty, yer honour. The son of me faythir, Denis Rafferty, ov Ballywhack, County Down."

"Hum! yes! I presume you are an Irishman, then? Have you been long at sea, Mr. Rafferty?" asked Christopher, with a patronizing air.

"Troth, I have, Sir, a mighty deal longer than I'd like to be again, unless I gits promotion,—as dear knows I've desarved to git long agone. I've bin more nor twenty times acress the Atlantic in the Cunard line ov steamers; so yez may be sartin I've sane a little bit ov say-service, an' have had a few ups an' downs, as the sayin' is, Sir."

"Hem! Mr. Rafferty, you must be an experienced man," said Mrs. Cockle, blandly. "I am thinking of sending my son in this steamer. Pray, what is your opinion on the subject?"

"Be jabers, thin, yez couldn't do a bit bettber, Mam, if yez built a ship on purpose for him. Yez may take my honest word for that same. It's the illigantest ship as iver crassed the say, so she is, be the same token she hasn't sane salt wather at all yit: but I'll bit a penny she'll slip through it like a scared whale whin vust they git the shteam up in their mighty big boilers fornent there. Why, she's span new, ivery haporth ov her, from stem to starrn, and as clane as a new razor: so what's to shtop her from going ahead, I'd like to know? Bedad, if she doesn't bate all the other ships that iver swam the ocean, I'll ate her, so I will. I can't say fairer nor that, Mam, savin' yer prisence."

"I am pleased to hear you express such a favourable opinion

“of this steamer,” said Mrs. Cockle, smiling at Tim, and at the same time slipping half-a-sovereign into his hand. “I will see you again shortly, and have a little private conversation with you, Rafferty. I think I may depend upon your paying particular attention to Christopher,—that is, to my son,—on the voyage. Poor fellow! he has never yet been to sea.”

“Niver frit a haporth about him, Mam, so long as I’m aboard. Lave him to me intirely, Mam, if yez please, an’ shure I’ll look afther him as tinderly as iv he wos me sisther’s last babby, ivery bit.”

With many similar protestations of his willingness to serve them, one and all, Tim bowed the visitors out of the saloon, and all the way to the gangway.

That night a solemn conference was held at Turtlesell Lodge of the members of the whole family, including Grandmother Cockle and Uncle Cobb, who had been specially summoned from Goose Green. After much deliberation, and many sighs and sobs and tears, it was resolved, *nem. con.*, that Christopher should go to Australia in the “Calabash;” and next morning part of his passage-money was paid to Messrs. Blandly and Co., Abchurch Lane, and his name booked for berth No. 4, in cabin No. 3, on the lower deck of that wonderful vessel.

CHAPTER V.

DESCRIBES various Matters, including another Family Visit to the "Calabash," and the final Departure of Christopher from his Boyhood's Home.

THE preparations for launching a steam frigate could scarcely cause more bustle and excitement than was manifested at Turtle-shell Lodge during the fortnight that succeeded the evening when it was gravely resolved to launch the heir and hope of the Cockle family upon the rock-studded ocean of life.

The mental and physical powers of the entire establishment were exerted to their utmost tension, while excited tradesmen in the neighbourhood almost fought for the privilege of preparing the necessary outfit for the young traveller. Padd, the tailor, and Peggs, the bootmaker, had to get extra hands from London, and other handicraftsmen shared in the harvest of orders unprecedented in the commercial annals of Tooting. Busy sempstresses plied their needles day and night, and wondered what on earth young Cockle could want with so many shirts and sheets; while old Glew, the cabinet-maker, thoroughly astounded the villagers with the pile of iron-bound boxes in his front workshop, all painted blue, and inscribed in large white letters, "Christopher Cockle, Esquire, Cabin Passenger to Sydney, *per* steamship 'Calabash.' This side up. With care."

Had Christopher been Mr. Glew's parish apprentice, boxless and friendless, it is questionable whether any one in Tooting would have given him sixpence to get his hair cut, or thoughtfully presented him with a monkey-jacket to save him from shivering to pieces in high latitudes; but as he was a rich man's son, and quite independent of extraneous aid, helping hands were as numerous as volunteers at a fire. A large number of strong boxes were necessary to contain the variety of articles which the solicitude of his friends and neighbours suggested, and the numberless *souvenirs* which their affection heaped upon him. He was too modest to cry, "Hold, enough!" and as his treasures accumulated from day to day, he felt almost as much perplexed what to do with them as the nervous

spinster whose eccentric brother in India sent her a present of two young leopards.

It was certainly kind of old Mrs. Coddles to make him a couple of undersuits of chamois leather to protect him against rheumatism, and very thoughtful of her husband to send him a cork jacket and a patent gutta percha slipper-bath, which might serve for a life-boat in case of the ship sinking at sea. It was generous, too, of Miss Fidge to present him with a tourist's companion, or portable cooking apparatus and dressing case combined, and equally well-meaning of his many other friends who loaded him with all sorts of modern inventions, as practically *useful* as bootjacks to naked savages, but which he felt in honour bound to carry with him, as they were keepsakes.

An advertisement in the "Times" for the next of kin to Widow Tiller, late of Shadwell, brought a Greenwich pensioner, with a wooden leg, to the Lodge, at full speed; and a negotiation was entered into for the "child's caul," which his late relative, Tom Tiller, usually carried in his watch-pocket, but who had inadvertently left it at home on the unlucky day when he was drowned.

The timber-toed veteran seemed reluctant to part with the caul, in the marvellous virtues of which he professed great confidence; but the virtues of a five-pound note were more attractive to him, and the mysterious skin was triumphantly secured by Mrs. Cockle, who verily believed that, with that talisman on his person, her son would be as safe from drowning as he would be within the shadow of the Sphinx in the Arabian desert. A silken bag was made for the unsavoury life-preserver, and Christopher solemnly promised his mother and sister that he would never go afloat, even to cross a river in a punt, without carrying the charm inside his vest.

A somewhat similar promise was reluctantly given to Lizzie Whiffin, when she presented him with a little gold locket, filled with hair and affixed to a silken guard, the work of her own little white fingers. Lizzie—by the way—had for some time been suspected of tender yearnings for the young heir of Turtle-shell Lodge, and the significant *souvenir* tended to confirm the opinions of Mrs. Cockle and Sophy on the subject. After a very confidential discussion, they decided that it was but right and proper to ascertain Christopher's mind on the matter before he went away, if only for the sake of his own peace, poor boy. When Mrs. Cockle mentioned it to him in the most delicate manner possible, he blushed deeply, and stammered out, in

effect, that he did not care very much for girls in general, because they were always quizzing him. As for Lizzie in particular, he thought she was not very sensible, or, at all events, not very civil; for he had been confidentially informed by somebody, who heard it as a secret from somebody else, that Lizzie had called him "Kit Custardhead" and "Simon Suckegg," and that she sometimes made ugly faces at him behind his back. He confessed, however, that *he* never saw her make an ugly face: on the contrary, he thought Lizzie's was the prettiest face in Tooting, except his sister's. Having ascertained that her dear boy's heart was not in danger of bursting with pent-up passion for Lizzie, the good lady prudently resolved to say no more about it for the present.

As Mrs. Cockle had not examined her son's cabin, nor seen Captain Toffey, it was arranged that she and Sophy and Christopher should go on board the "Calabash" previous to giving Glew orders to make an easy chair, a wardrobe, and other articles of bedroom furniture, which they thought were indispensable; so one forenoon, about three weeks after their first visit, they again drove to Deptford, and hired a waterman to row them alongside the ship. As Lizzie Whiffin was very anxious to see the pretty ship of which she had heard such transporting descriptions, she was invited to go with them, and judge for herself.

Captain Toffey was on board the ship that morning, and received his visitors most courteously. There was also one of the owners of the "Calabash" on board, who—as Mrs. Cockle afterwards told her husband—"was a very nice gentleman indeed, and as free from pride as though he were a mere man who did not possess a change of apparel or change for a shilling; notwithstanding he was said to be one of the most pushing young merchants in Sydney, and worth nobody knew how much!"

The Captain evidently sympathized with her tender feelings at parting with her son; and, with a suavity quite touching, promised to give an eye to him on the voyage. The Doctor, too, with all the warmth of a generous young Irishman, assured her that her darling should not die in that ship, if chirurgical skill and physic could keep him alive. After a short private conference with the latter gentleman on his treatment of cholera symptoms, and receiving from him his word of honour that no passenger suffering from the smallpox, St. Vitus's dance, or

ringworm, should be put into the same cabin with her boy, her mind seemed much relieved. She then sought Tim Rafferty, and was by him conducted to the lower saloon, and shown the various accommodations in his department, which he dilated upon with all the force of his brogue and blarney.

"Gracious me ! and is this what you call a state-room ?" said Mrs. Cockle, as she entered a cabin about ten feet by six, lighted by one round port-hole in the side, and a bull's eye in the upper deck. "And do you actually expect four persons to sleep in this dark muggy cell, which is hardly as big as a monkey's cage at the Zoological Gardens ? I am shocked outright ! State-room, indeed ! Ugh ! a pretty state my poor boy will be in before he gets to Sydney, especially if his companions are sea-sick all the way as well as himself. Where in the world is he to put all his trunks, let alone any furniture ?"

"Trunks is it ye mane, Mam ? Och, don't bother yerself at all about em ; jist lave me to look afther em, Mam, if ye please. My word for it, they shall be trated as tinderly as if they were ladies' bonnets or bird-cages," said Rafferty, as confidently as if he had the control of everything and everybody on board. "He can stow a couple of little uns under his berth, and the rist can go intil the luggage-room, an' they'll be as safe as goold in the bank, ivery bit. As for himself, the darlint, I'll engage to make him as comfortable as if yer were goin' wid him yerself, Mam. Faix, I'll look sharp enough after him, so I will ; so don't be fritting yerself the laste bit in life, Mam. Be dash'd if I let so much as a cockroach come a nigh him, an' if any insafyrior character on board dares to wink at him even, I'll knock his eye out in a crack, that's what I'll do, Mam ; so kape yer mind as aisy as if yer was fast asleep, soh."

"I cannot realize the idea of my dear boy existing in such discomfort as this little hole suggests," whined Mrs. Cockle. "Dear, dear me, I wish he were not going at all. I cannot help associating those miserable little sleeping berths with paupers' coffins, or pork butchers' pickling troughs. Which one will Christopher occupy ?"

"I'll give him the top one, Mam, right forninst the port-hole ; thin he'll have plinty of daylight save when it's dark, an' oceans ov frish air when he opens his windee."

"I would rather he had the bottom berths, lest he should roll out of bed when the ship rocks."

"Troth, I'll tuck him in as tight as a hare in a hamper, Mam. If he rolls out he may roll me overboard, an' I won't say a

worrd til him, if he dhrowns me althegether. The top berth is a mighty dale plisanter nor the bottom one, cos yez see, Mam,—savin yer prisinse,—if the jintleman above should be say-sick, or git dhrunk, or the like o' that, he might"—

"Ah, yes, I see, I see," interrupted Mrs. Cockle; "you are right, Rafferty. Let him have the top berth, by all means. I hope you will see that his bed linen is well aired."

"Sorra a bit ov linen or woollen aythir shall come anigh his skin that isn't as dhry as a tinder-box; I'll take care about that same, Mam, so don't yez be onaisy; an' I'll look afther all his clothes, too, by yer lave. Buttons are apt to carry away sometimes at say; but I'll whip em on agin, in the twist of a mar'n-spike."

"Thank you, Rafferty; I shall be very glad if you will see to his buttons; and please to be very careful that he does not wear damp boots. By the way, I was almost forgetting what I particularly wished to ask you. Suppose I send a few bottles of home-made elderberry wine, will you be good enough to take charge of it, and mull a little drop for Christopher on cold nights, with a bit or two of toast, you know?"

"To be shure I will, Mam, wid plaisure; send as much ov it as yez can spare, an I'll put it away safe enough. It ull be mighty comfortin to him, too, I'm thinkin, in cowl'd weather, so it will; an I'm rale glad yez didn't forgit to remimber it, Mam."

"If I think of anything else of importance, I will let you know," said Mrs. Cockle, as she handed a sovereign to Tim, and prepared to depart, with her mind full of misgivings as to the possibility of her son sleeping a wink all the way to Sydney.

"Think ov whatever yez like, Mam, ony jist tell me yer plaisure, an it shall be done afore ye've done spaking," said Tim, bowing obsequiously. "Kape yer mind aisy, Mam, axing yer pardin for bein so bowld. An don't ye frit a haporth, young ladies; take my worrd for it, the darlint young jintleman shall go all the way to Sydney as softly as if he wos sittin in a sedan chair stuffed wid little chickens' feathers."

"I should like to have a few minutes' conversation with you, Christopher, if you will step this way," said Mr. Cockle one evening, about a week before the sailing of the "Calabash." Christopher dutifully expressed acquiescence, and followed his father into the library.

"Now, Kit, my boy, I want you to give me a glimmering of your future operations," said Mr. Cockle, after he had seated himself in his easy chair. "Tell me what you think of doing when you get to Australia."

"Hem; yes, father, I will. Hem! I shall be guided to some extent by circumstances, you know: a— a— that is to say, pecuniary matters; you understand, father. If I am to go on my own resources, to work my own way as it were, a—a— I shall probably buy a pickaxe and shovel soon after I land, and go straightway to the diggings, and dig up some gold. When I have gathered enough, I shall very likely look about me for an investment; and I am told they are to be met with every day. I am not quite decided what I shall do then; hem—a—if I should invest in houses, and I can let them to safe tenants, who will send me their rent regularly, I may come home again very soon; but that, of course, is rather uncertain, father. I may purchase a cattle station, if I can see one very cheap; and either boil down the beasts, and bring home their hides and tallow, or else stay there and—and"—

"Get married and settle down for life, I suppose you mean, Kit," said the good-natured old Alderman, smiling at his son's stammering attempts to delineate his chimerical plans.

"O dear me, no, father! nothing of the sort, I assure you," exclaimed Christopher, blushing intensely. "I don't want a wife, father; goodness me, no! I never even dreamt of such a thing, never! I would sooner die than be so ungrateful to Ma and Sophy as to prefer any one to them; a— a— leastways, to— to get married without asking their leave. What I was going to say, father, is, that I might stay there, and go right into sheep with Mr. Shicer, who says"—

"Then Mr. Shicer will fleece the sheep and you too," interrupted his father; "that is my opinion, which, of course, I only state to you in confidence, for I don't wish to injure his reputation, and it is possible I may have formed a wrong estimate of him. It is true I have only seen the man once; but that one interview convinced me that he knows as little of sheep as he does of surgery, and he knows still less of the rules of civilized society. I strongly advise you to have nothing to do with him, Kit, for he is a 'Jack Brag,' if he is nothing worse; and I am certain he is no more a type of the Australian colonists than a Dutch plaice is a fair specimen of the fish in the sea.

"While I question you as to your future plans, my boy, of course I know very well you cannot give me anything like a

clear outline of them; and perhaps it will be wiser for me to give you a brief sketch of my plans for you, so far as I can define them myself. I have had a good deal of conversation with your mother on the subject; and though we differ a little in our views respecting you, we, of course, have a mutual interest in your welfare, and look upon you as the hope of our house, and the prop of our declining years.

“For my part, I would rather you went on your own resources as you say, because from observation, and experience too, I am convinced that more men have risen to opulence and honourable positions through their own exertions, than those who have begun the world with fortunes ready made to their hands. I could give you many examples of wealthy citizens of London who have worked their way up in the world from very humble positions, and I could also give you many sorrowful examples of an exactly opposite character. What we have taken some pains to acquire we generally prize more than what we obtain without personal effort. That is a settled axiom, Kit, which you had better note in your memory.

“Your mother has great reliance on the influence of your home training and good education, and to some extent she is justified in her views; but, while I do not undervalue those advantages, I believe that a little less home coddling, and a little more business knowledge, would have made you better fitted to bear inconveniences, and to jostle with the excited crowds of money-seekers that you are likely to meet in the far-off lands to which you are bound. However, I am happy to believe that you have no vices, Kit; you have always been a good boy, and it is generally remarked that you are steady and sedate beyond your years. It is true, your judgment has not been much tested; but I am inclined to believe that it will prove sound, if not strong, as it is developed by experience. In short, I have confidence that you will prove yourself a thorough Cockle, in proof of which, and in accordance with the wishes of your mother and sister, I shall intrust you with a moderate capital, which you may turn to good account, if you act circum-spectly, in a country where there are so many open fields for enterprise and persevering industry.

“I dare say you will be able to find your uncle Nicholas, of whom I wish to say a few words to you in confidence before you leave. I intend, too, to procure letters of introduction for you to several influential colonists; and you will show your judgment by consulting your friends before taking any im-

portant step. You need not be in haste with any of your operations, for you know you are not dependent on the returns of your capital; indeed, I think it would be advisable for you to spend twelve months or so in seeing the country and gaining experience before you embark in any settled pursuit. You may gain a good deal of practical wisdom in that time if you are observant. Keep your eyes open and your mouth shut, as the divers do when fishing for pearls."

"I have been thinking, father, that you might send over a shipment of spr—, hem! anchovies in barrels; I am told that preserved fish sells at enormous prices on the diggings. In fact, Mr. Shicer says"—

"Bother Mr. Shicer!" said Mr. Cockle, hastily. "I wouldn't trust him for a dozen herrings. So don't mention him again, Kit, or I shall be afraid to trust you; for it is reasonable enough to estimate a man's value by the character of his companions. When you have been long enough in the colonies to form solid opinions, you will find me ready and willing to help you in any sound, honest project you can devise. But I intend to write a long letter of advice for you to study at your leisure, so it is not necessary to extend this conference. Let us go into the parlour now, my boy, and comfort your mother and sister; and for the few remaining days that you will be here, let us all try to be cheerful and happy. The house has been as gloomy for the last few weeks as if poor grandmother were dead."

Many of my readers will know something about leaving home and kindred and friends for the first time. They keenly remember the peculiar sorrow of parting from the dearest influences of life, and the shivering sense of loneliness which stole over their heart as they, for the first time, stepped out into a world full of strangers. Those who have never left the hallowed home circle could not realize the feeling by anything my pen could express, while to the experienced reader any description would be unnecessary; so I shall but cursorily allude to that first real trial in Christopher's young life.

The events of the last seven days of his sojourn in the home of his childhood will long survive in the memories of his fond relatives; and the old servants still tell the oft-repeated story by their winter fireside. What pen could graphically describe the varied excitement of that memorable week in the classic neighbourhood of Streatham and Upper Tooting, or portray the

many tender scenes in the little breakfast parlour at the Lodge ; or the melting seasons in the drawing-room, when friends crowded to unload their hearts' sympathies, and sigh out their fond adieus in the most pathetic words which prose could employ ? Who could do justice to the Rev. Rector's sermon on the last Sunday, so full of pathos and appropriate sentiment, or depict in adequate terms poor Mrs. Cockle's overwhelming emotion when her learned pastor so tenderly alluded to her departing son ? Who could tell, in a sufficiently delicate manner, how Sophy fainted, and was carried into the vestry by young Jacob Moon and her sorrowing brother ? How Padd, the tailor—who was leader of the choir—could not sing for crying ; and how Daddy Stoakes, the beadle, boxed the ears of the sexton's boy for bursting out into a horse laugh, and making all the charity children giggle ? How old Rakes had a fit as he was waiting in the church porch for the family to come out ; and how old Brownie bolted and smashed the phaeton all to pieces, and knocked down the town pump ?

Who, I ask, could effectively describe all that ? I confess my want of adequate skill, so will leave the task to some other scribe, and briefly record that the moment of departure came at last ; when Christopher, with his father and mother and sister, left the Lodge in a hired fly, and drove direct to the Great Western Railway, where they took the express train for Plymouth, to join the "Calabash," which was to sail on the following day.

Sobbing and sighing resounded through the servants' hall of Turtleshell Lodge for some minutes after the noise of the fly had died away in the distance. Sally Mander, the cook, was particularly affected. She described her feelings "as though she had a big blister all over her breast," and she could get no ease until she had paid two furtive visits to "old Tom" in her corner cupboard. By degrees, however, the sorrow-stricken domestics regained sufficient courage to re-assemble at the dinner table ; and an hour afterwards there were no more traces of grief on their faces than there would be of circles on the surface of a pond, an hour after the submersion of a blind puppy, with a brick-bat tied to his tail.

CHAPTER VI.

CONTAINS an Account of Christopher's Mysterious Visions in the cold Lodging-house at Plymouth, his final Farewell to his Friends, and the Departure of the "Calabash."

WHEN the dingy light of the 25th of November first broke on the swollen eyes of Christopher, he muttered a gloomy expression of relief that the darkness was gone; for had he passed the night in a haunted Alpine cave, he could scarcely have suffered more acute mental horror, or have felt more miserably cold. There was but a bare prison modicum of blankets on his bed, and a piercing draught from a broken window pane had borne myriads of sharp icy atoms along a fog-wreath straightway to his nose; at the same time, his mind had been racked with dreams as strange as they were terrifying.

On the arrival of the family at Plymouth, the previous day, they had secured lodgings near to the Hoe, commanding a view from the dining-room windows of the shipping in the Sound; that is to say, when the shipping and everything else were not enveloped in fog and mist. The fatigue of the journey from London, the dismal state of the weather, and the mournful anticipations of the morrow, had tended to sink the spirits of the two ladies and Christopher below zero, and even the hopeful old Alderman could not keep his face from occasional twitches, which betrayed the emotion of his heart. His jokes, too, were so dashed with dreariness that he could not even smile at them himself, and his faintly-drawn pictures of the future greatness of their beloved Kit were as powerless to excite pleasing emotions as a peep through the window into foggy obscurity.

As a last expedient, either to "drive dull care away" or to divert it for a time, Mr. Cockle proposed a feast of dainties, for which the county of Devon is specially famous. Meeting with no dissent from his wife, and with a languid assent from his children, the worthy old gentleman rang the bell, and, after a little contention with the doubting servant, (who had to be stimulated with a shilling,) he arranged for a supper at ten

o'clock, of apple dumplings, with clotted cream, a squab pie, a crab, a junket, and some real stinging farm-house cider.

It was after partaking of a hearty supper of those luxuries that Christopher embraced his parents and sister, sobbingly bade them his last good night, and went shivering to his fireless chamber. Soon after he had got into bed he discovered that he had barely a summer night's allowance of bedding; but, being naturally averse to troubling any one, especially strangers, he piled his doffed apparel upon the bed, then coiled himself up, and was soon fast asleep.

But, ugh! the terrors of that long, dark night, and those mysterious visitations which left an indelible impression on his mind for life! Who can even imagine them without risking his peace and the colour of his hair? Reader, if you should believe that those Devonshire delicacies were at the bottom of the mystery; that the crab and the squab pie drove those nebulous images from Christopher's oppressed ventricle to his throbbing brain; permit me to say to you, think what you please, but don't tell his mother, or she will sharply say she knows better, for she has studied "the night side of nature." I would further say to you, please to suspend your judgment for a while, and before you have finished my story you will be better prepared to pronounce an opinion on the origin or the object of those phantasms, or whatever else they were.

Christopher slept, (his father said he snored,) and as he did so he fancied he was on board the "Calabash" in the Pacific Ocean, and was rampantly dancing on the deck with a monstrous fat man, dressed like a Mandarin. The brass band was seated on the skylight, playing the Irish quadrilles; scores of gaily-dressed passengers were dancing on each side of the quarter-deck, and a tribe of bustling stewards were carrying round sherry cobblers in quart pots. Captain Toffey was sitting on the capstan, blowing "Cheer, boys, cheer," on his speaking trumpet, and his young brother owner was sitting beside him playing an accompaniment on a brass jew's-harp. The junior midshipman was perched on the binnacle jingling a triangle, and the engineers, in top boots, were trotting the donkey-engine up and down the main deck. Mirth and revelry abounded, and every one was in a transport of delight; for they expected to be filling their carpet-bags with nuggets the week after next, as the vessel was flying along full steam, faster than the sea gulls and "Mother Carey's chickens," and making the porpoises jump with astonishment.

Suddenly, Christopher saw the man with the trombone (who, he thought, was Mr. Shicer's cousin) wink his left eye and begin to blow a "white squall," while his head expanded to the size of a porter cask and his instrument grew as long as the steam-pipe. An awful commotion ensued, which it is only just possible to glance at. Crash went the two funnels overboard; smash went the gigantic paddle-wheels; whir-r-r roared the steam from the big boilers, and wheugh! yelled Tim Rafferty, as he rushed up from the saloon with all his hair singed off.

The unfortunate captain was skinned as clean as a spring lamb, and his young friend beside him was done as brown as a roasted goose. The chief mate was tattooed all over with coal dust, and the purser was hit in the eye with a hot cinder. The cook was scalded to death with bubble-and-squeak, and the boatswain's whistle was blown clean down his throat. The engineers had all their buttons dashed, and their top boots blown inside out, and the stokers were smothered in soot. Helter-skelter fled some of the astounded dancers, howling like winter winds, while others tumbled down and went off bang like squibs, scattering a shower of sparks around them. The Mandarin was blown into the ice-house, and as he kept a tight grasp of Christopher's waist, he was blown into the ice-house too. Such a terrific blow, and the sudden crashing and smashing that followed it, were enough to arouse anybody; and Christopher's perturbation may be imagined, when he became conscious that he was doubled up beneath the bed-clothes, with his nose between his knees, shouting loudly for Tim Rafferty to pull the fat Chinaman off his breast.

After he had thoroughly assured himself that it was only a dream after all, he soon shivered himself to sleep again, and fancied he was at Bendigo diggings, in a dark hole, a long way under ground. He had found a nugget as heavy as the garden roller at Turtleshell Lodge; but with his utmost efforts he could not move it an inch. As he was sitting on the nugget, wondering what he should do with it, he saw in the distance a gaunt, hairy figure, with eyes like red signal lamps, coming straight towards him. As the figure approached, Christopher discovered that it was Mr. Shicer in digger's costume. After an exchange of friendly salutations, they set to work to get the nugget to earth, and desperately hard work it was; at length it was accomplished, when, lo! on a sudden Mr. Shicer vanished in blue smoke, taking the gold with him, but leaving behind him an immense leathern bag. Upon Christopher

giving the bag a pettish kick it burst, and such a cold cutting blast rushed from it into his face, that he awoke from the shock to find his nose on the point of freezing with the draught from the broken window.

He hastily got out of bed, thrust his stocking into the fractured pane, then got into bed again, and tried to compose himself to sleep. It was some time, though, before he dozed off; for his teeth rattled like a sewing machine, under the combined influence of excitement and cold. When at length he did sleep, disagreeable fancies again crept over his brain like black spiders. He imagined he was in the far interior of Australia, on a cattle station which he had recently purchased very cheap. He was taking a quiet walk round his run with his stock-book under his arm, when a multitude of native blacks sprang out of the bush, with knives and forks in their hands, and rushed after him jabbering and grinning like goblins. He turned to run back to the huts, but, lo! they had all sunk under the ground, not a shingle could be seen of his late homestead. He turned again, and dashed through the bush, shouting, "Police! Police!" closely followed by the hungry savages, eager to eat him up, when all at once he emerged from the bush to a grassy plain, covered with horned cattle, which he recognised by the brands as part of his late purchase. Simultaneously, however, the whole herd pointed their tails to the sky and ran at him, bellowing and tossing their heads with fury. Once more he turned and ran for his life; but just as he was gaining the shelter of a forest, a formidable old bull stag, with Mr. Shicer's little black pipe in his mouth, caught him and tossed him among the topmost branches of a spotted gum tree. In his rapid ascent, the stock-book fell from under his arm, and went clean down the old bull's throat, without making him cough.

There the unlucky stock-owner was hanging by the tails of his coat from a rotten limb, when he again awoke in a cold perspiration, while the joints of his iron bedstead rattled like a tinker's cart. He lay tremblingly meditating on the meaning of those awful dreams, until the day dawned to comfort him. Gladly he arose to refresh himself, and to restore his benumbed circulation by calisthenic exercises, until the fire was lighted in the breakfast room below.

When Christopher related his late miseries to his family, his mother shook her head and shuddered; for she too had been disturbed all night by goblins, and even Sophy confessed that

she had had disagreeable sensations which she could not describe.

Mrs. Cockle expressed her decided opinion, that all those mysterious visitations were omens or forewarnings of future trouble for their boy, and said she had a very good mind not to let him go away at all. Mr. Cockle sat in silence, sipping his coffee, until his wife had finished a long whining rhapsody, when he bluntly replied "that he had no doubt in the world but their late feast had been playing 'old gooseberry' with them all; for he had felt as queer all night as though he had swallowed half-a-pint of live shrimps;" and he added, "that if he ever supped again off Devonshire dumplings, clotted cream, and sharp cider, he hoped a stud of night-mares would kick him black and blue for his folly, in sacrificing his peace, to please his palate."

The pathways of Plymouth streets were crisp with frost, the puddles were all solid with iced mud, and the tops of the houses were still enveloped in their foggy nightcaps, when Mrs. Cockle sallied out after breakfast to make a few last purchases for her darling boy, including some sticking plaister, a box of pills, some peppermint drops, and a little dark lantern wherewith to examine his bed before he got into it; for she had heard of scorpions, centipedes, and a host of other nasty little insects, infesting passengers' berths on board ship. When the good lady returned with her purchases, she solemnly remarked, with a peculiar emphasis, "that she could conscientiously say she had omitted nothing that she could possibly think of in order to insure her son's safety or comfort; and, whatever disaster might result from his unhappy determination to visit foreign lands, she would consider herself in no way responsible or blameable."

About midday the fog sped away seaward, and permitted a sight of Plymouth Sound and the "Calabash," with a blue peter flying at the fore-royal masthead, the signal for passengers to embark.

I will not harrow the feelings of the tender-hearted reader by depicting the scene in the dining-room as the sorrowing party stood gazing at the proud vessel before them, and realizing the sad fact that ere the sun would set, their only boy, their pride and hope and joy, would be gone from their gaze, perhaps, for ever! Ladies' tears are natural as summer showers, and are sometimes rather interesting than otherwise; but an outburst of grief from an old man's heart is as awful to behold as a water-

spout at sea. To tell how poor old Alderman Cockle cried—yea, roared—out his long pent-up fatherly feelings would be too touching altogether; so I forbear to meddle with his sorrow.

Half an hour afterwards, the heavy-hearted relatives were crossing the Hoe, (past a crowd of wretched-looking Russian prisoners, who were airing themselves on the green,) towards the waterman's ferry, and soon they were afloat, steering straight-way for the "Calabash."

There were numberless boats alongside that vessel, with passengers, their luggage, and friends, and with crowds of inquisitive visitors. There was also a coal lighter discharging her freight into the bunkers, and at the same time begriming the decks, and the faces of the folks on the decks, with coal-dust. The Captain was evidently careworn, and more worried than flattered by the incessant greetings and cross-questionings of his company, and their eulogistic remarks on his noble ship. He struggled hard—good old soul—to preserve his usual benign expression of face, though his smile sometimes looked as unreal as a bland welcome from a nervous man to the dentist who is about to draw a tooth; or to a sheriff's bailiff with a writ in his hand. The officers, all dressed in their best uniform, were energetically directing the crew in their various duties, and the crew were working hard and shouting loudly, after the style of sailors in general. The live stock were all giving voice to their desire to go on shore again for a feed of grass, in a kind of Noah's ark chorus. The brass band was playing its noisiest tunes, and the big boilers were blowing off their superfluous steam from the safety valves, while the coughs of the donkey engine unloading the lighter, and the rumbling of avalanches of coal into the iron bunkers, completed a medley of harmony and discord by no means soothing, and which Mr. Cockle said was "a regular row, that beat Billingsgate Market all to shrimp-skins."

Even a faint attempt to realize the scene will enable the reader to sympathize sufficiently with the Cockle family when they found themselves on that busy deck, which presented such a striking contrast to the quietude and cleanliness that prevailed when they last saw it.

"Lawk-a-mercy me, Noah! whatever *shall* we do?" asked Mrs. Cockle, looking as bewildered as though she were in Smithfield on market-day. "Did ever anybody hear such a hobgoblin's riot? I am certain our dear boy can no more exist a week in such a ship as this, than he could live in a lion's den. Let us go home again directly, my dear, I beg and pray! Leave

all the luggage for Mr. Rafferty: I don't care for anything in the world if we all get safe home again, there to live and die together comfortably. I shall certainly break my poor heart, Noah, if Christopher goes away on this floating Tower of Babel; so, if you value my life, dear, take us all home together."

"Patience, mother, patience! don't be a child. Come down stairs and compose yourself," said Mr Cockle, elbowing his way through the crowd to the companion-way, closely followed by his party; but when they got into the grand saloon, there was very little to induce composure of mind or body either. Not a vacant corner could they find where they might sit down and quietly discuss their troubles, and decide what to do. Groups of persons were seated at various parts of the table, trying with champagne and other cordials to soften the real pain of parting. The popping of corks was as exciting as Tower Hill on Guy Fawkes' night, and made Sophy dreadfully uneasy for the safety of her eyes and nose: so, for their preservation, they all descended to the lower saloon, which they found tolerably crowded with nursemaids, cross children, and luggage.

"Bless me! the ship is full of racket and confusion, from top to bottom!" exclaimed Mr. Cockle, pettishly, as he scraped his left leg against the sharp angle of a brass-bound box. "Here, go into Kit's cabin, girls, out of the way, while I shout for your friend Paddy What's-his-name." Saying which, he hastily opened the door of cabin No. 3, and pushed in Sophy and her mother, who, in the imperfect light of the place, stumbled over a portmanteau on the floor, and fell struggling upon the back of a stout gentleman, with long curly hair, who was on his knees busily stowing away some of his personal effects into the space beneath his berth.

The surprise was mutual, and the apologies were mutual too, for the fat gentleman was very polite, and he could not fail to see that it was an accidental mishap of the ladies. He begged them to calm themselves, and kindly extemporized seats for them. He then introduced himself as Professor Presto; said he was happy to make the acquaintance of Christopher, who he understood was to sleep over him for the voyage, and added, "My younger brother and I are going to Australia on a professional tour, and we shall be very glad of such a quiet young gentleman to share our cabin. I am an old voyager, Ma'am, and I assure you it is a matter of no small importance to have agreeable companions in such hackney-coach-like quarters as these."

Mrs. Cockle could never remember how she replied to the polite gentleman; but Mr. Cockle remembers that when he returned to the cabin, after a fruitless search for Rafferty, his wife told him seriously that her brains were rolling about in her head like balls of worsted: but after resting for half an hour, she became much more composed.....

"Thanks be to goodness! that's Mr. Rafferty's voice!" exclaimed Mrs. Cockle, suddenly starting up, and going to the state-room door, as the sound of Tim's brogue, in the distance, caught her anxious ear.

"Mr. Rafferty! Rafferty! Mr. Rafferty!" she called, in an excited treble. "I want to speak to you, if you please!"

"Och! may bad luck itself seize the whole bilin ov yez! Ye'll bather the brains clane out ov me. Bad manners til yez for a lot ov squealin spalpeens; an what is it yer take me for, at all? It's 'Rafferty! Rafferty! Rafferty!' all over the ship, as if I wos the faythir ov all ov yez. Won't nobody else do for yez, ye beggars? An' shure, didn't yez want me to split myself up intil forty little bits an be in fifty places at onst? Dash yer imperence!"

"Oh, my goodness, Noah! did you hear that?" asked Mrs. Cockle, with uplifted hands and shocked eyes. "Did ever anybody hear such blood-thirsty language? Mercy on us! And to think we should all be so deceived in that man as to trust our blessed boy in his charge! And to think, too, that we should be so silly as to send a big box of our old elder wine, currant jelly, and virgin honey to the care of such a savage as that! Oh, Noah! Noah! what shall we do? However can you sit there, with your thumbs in your waistcoat, and say nothing?"

"Who was it callin' me jist now?" roared Tim, entering the saloon, heated and excited with his numerous troublesome duties. "Who was it? Bother yez, why don't ye spake, if yez haven't cracked yer bellows intirely wid bawlin afther me whin I wos comin as fast as a steam-engine? Who the mischief are yez at all? as the body-snatcher sed to the ghost!"

"It was I who called you, Mr. Rafferty," said Mrs. Cockle solemnly, as she stepped out of the state-room, looking like the emblem of outraged generosity.

"Shure an I ony whist I'd know'd it afore, Mam, an I'd have broke me neck wid runnin ta yez, so I wud. I'm rale sorry ye had the trouble to call me twice, Mam, but ye see there's a lot ov haythins come aboard, an they've bin bawlin in me ears,

ivery one iv em, till I'm got so bothered I'd hardly tell me own blissed mother's swate voice, iv I heerd it in this saloon, that's a fact, Mam. Troth, I'm not meself at all; an no wondher naythir, seein how I've bin pulled an hauled about all the day long.

"An is young Misther Cockem come aboard widg yez? ta be shure he is soh, for dont I see him alongside ov his sisther? Och, dont be afther cryin all ov yez, bekase there's not a bit ov fear ov the young gintleman, so long as I'm aboard; an ye maydn't frit a haporth about him. I'll land him in Sydney as sound as a church bell, take my word for it. An shure we won't have this racket in the ship allers, not at all; we'll have nothin but pace an quietness as soon as we gits to say; so niver frit a bit.".....

I pass over the stirring events of the next hour or two, during which Mrs. Cockle's confidence in Tim was restored, and Mr. Cockle's opinion of him was confirmed. I leave the reader to picture the parting scene, and realize the last hugs of parents and sister, and their sobbing exeunt from the ship to the waterman's wherry.

About four P.M., Captain Toffey mounted the bridge, with his speaking-trumpet in his hand, which he waved triumphantly to his agent, Mr. Blandly, who was sitting in a waterman's boat, wiping his eyes. The moment the officer on the fore-castle announced that the anchor was aweigh, the command was telegraphed to the engineer below to turn-ahead, easy; when the ponderous paddle-wheels began to stir the waters of Plymouth Sound into bubbles, and perhaps to break the backs of a multitude of astonished pilchards and sprats.

"Hurrah! hurrah! hurrah!" cheered the crowds of relatives and friends, in boats astern. "Hurrah! hurrah! hurrah!" shouted the crew and passengers in reply. Bang, bang, went the brass guns on the quarter-deck. "Full speed," said the Captain; and away went the "Calabash," with colours flying on both masts, and the brass band playing "Hoky poky whinkee fun!"

Two hours afterwards, Christopher might have been seen leaning over the taffrail, sorrowfully gazing at the shore, which was almost shrouded in the gathering gloom of a winter evening. As he looked and sighed, those pathetic lines of Lord Byron, "My native land, good-night!" rose to his memory; but he had scarcely sobbed out the second line, ere a sort of brimstone-and-treacle sensation stole over him, which made all

poetic ideas flee from his brain, like fairies at day-dawn, or cats at a blunderbuss. Summoning his dying energies, he crawled to his cabin, and called for Rafferty, who quickly appeared, drew off his boots, and helped him into bed with many appropriate bits of blarney; and, after placing certain conveniences within his reach, left him for a time to the society of the prostrate Professor, and his little brother Jingo, in opposite berths, who were loudly practising one of the most discordant duets conceivable; while a tipsy gentleman in the fourth berth played a spirited voluntary on his nasal organ.

"Now thin, Misther Cockem, iv yez plaize, Sir, be afther swallowin this nice little dhrop ov elder wine, hot an shtrong as shteam from the donkey-engine," said Tim, as he appeared at Christopher's bed-side an hour or two afterward, with a tumbler full of hot wine, on a tray. "Sit up, honey! an tashte this lovely tack. Yer mother—the dare crather—towld me to give yez a noggin, whinever yez war'ent well; an I'm thinkin yer'e not faaling quite yerself jist at prisint, or yez wudn't be roarin out in that style, any way. Arrah! lift up yer head a bit, Misther Cockem. Save us! what a mess yer bunk is in! Dhrink this, good-luck til yez, Sir."

"Hah! ugh! take it out of my sight for pity's sake," groaned Christopher. "Oh my! oh my! ugh! take it away, Tim: go away; go away; go away!"

Tim obeyed with uncommon alacrity, and left the cabin with the hot wine, grinning like a boy at a bird's nest; while his unhappy *protégé* rolled over, and prepared to pass the time as satisfactorily as sea-sick passengers usually do the first night on board a fast steamer, in a brisk head wind, and with two or three sympathizing companions in the same small cabin.

CHAPTER VII.

CONTAINS some explanatory Remarks, which should not be passed over. Also, some Account of Tim Rafferty's Troubles, with his experienced Advice to Sea-sick Passengers.

HAVING got my hero fairly at sea, and closely confined to his cabin, without either the will or the power to move out of it, I will leave him to ruminate on his new phase of life, and to realize the peculiar ups and downs of the far-famed Bay of Biscay, while I take the liberty of saying a few words explanatory and apologetical, which I hope will not be skipped over.

Some of my readers may probably infer from my lengthy preamble that I am spinning out my subject, after the fashion of scribes who have but little to write about; and they may begin to shudder lest I intend to inflict upon them the dreary details of a long sea voyage, with oft-repeated descriptions of storms, calms, and other every-day incidentals to a "life on the ocean wave." I beg at once to assure them that such is not my design. I shall pass through the calm belts without a murmur, cross the line without even half a *line*, and take the rough and the smooth weather without complaining of either. I shall not notice any of the slimy monsters of the deep, much less draw full-length portraits of them. The most fascinating full-jawed shark shall not tempt me to touch him; for I have an abundance of other fish for my lines, some of them very funny fish, too. I shall try to avoid being prosy or tiresome; but while I strive to amuse, I have a paramount desire to edify, and as far as I can to epitomize my varied experience into a sort of chart for young men, and young women too, whose minds are bent upon emigrating to any of the Australian colonies, by showing them in numerous authentic examples prevalent evils which they should guard against, with many practical hints on various subjects; and, on the other hand, giving a few encouraging instances of successful triumphs over difficulties which are specially to be met with in these young countries.

If any cautious, matter-of-fact squire is about to close my book and to pronounce it light or trifling, after a mere cursory glance at certain parts of it, I would ask him to read on, and patiently search among the chaff for sound grains; he will certainly find a few, which I trust will germinate and produce good, though it be but a light crop. Abstract truths are not always most readily received, and it is a consideration of that fact which has induced me to adopt a style of writing which experience has proved to me is most likely to attract the class of readers for which my story is more especially intended. But, though I aim at instructing young folks principally, I think that parents who are about to send their young sons or daughters into this part of the world may pick out some useful practical hints from my book, although they may possibly find some matters therein of which their sober judgment will disapprove. The simplest herbs under a roadside hedge sometimes contain rare medicinal properties; and a plug of tarry oakum, which delicate hands would shrink from touching, has saved a noble vessel from sinking to the bottom of the sea.

Again, I would remark that most of my stories and incidents are substantially true, and I trust it will be seen that while I give free play at times to a flighty imagination, it is checked at the line which distinguishes harmless fun or useful satire from ill-natured irony. My pretty careful observance of men and things during a residence of nearly thirty years in the colonies warrants me in giving decided opinions on many subjects of local importance; and though my views may not always be expressed in very serious terms, they have been carefully considered, and I know they are honest and impartial. Moreover; while I study to be graphic, I would not deliberately write one word which would be even suggestive of impurity, or otherwise violate good taste. My free use of technical or characteristic phrases and figures will, I trust, in no case be mistaken for "slang," which I thoroughly eschew, and never wittingly make use of, except as an occasional quotation, or to show up its contemptible qualities.

Three months' voyaging in a ship, with more than seventy first-class passengers, would naturally furnish many novel incidents which a playful pen could make amusing without being offensive; and if I occupy a good many pages with a description of Christopher's voyage to Sydney, it is because I think I can do so without wearying my readers, and I hope to instruct them to some extent. I would have it remembered that a colonial

steamer, equipped in such a lavish style of elegance, certainly never before crossed the ocean to Australia, and probably never will again. I do not notice the fact to censure the owners or projectors of the ship for their extravagant expenditure, but more to exemplify the Utopian speculation and reckless prodigality of those "golden days," as they were called, which every well-wisher to the colonies would dread to see return. To show how general was the desire for grandeur and display, irrespective of cost, I may mention that about the time when the owners of the "Calabash" were sanguinely discussing their project of building a vessel, which for speed, convenience, and magnificence should surpass any other steamer in the southern hemisphere, (and there were some sage old heads, too, among those projectors,) some of the members of the Victoria Parliament were debating about the colour or quality of the marble which they intended to import from Europe to build the front of their new Council Chambers, although there is an abundance of superior marble in the colony if it were required for such a purpose. In fact, from the highest to the lowest classes in the land, the spirit of extravagance was rampant in those days, and was sometimes manifested in excesses at which credulity staggers and common sense is struck aghast.

Some landlords will now feelingly refer to those "good times," and talk of the fabulous rentals they received for their city tenements, which they are glad to let, at the present time, at moderate rates. Farmers, too, will tell you with longing smiles, how they sold their 1853 crop of wheat for 13s. a bushel, and their maize crop for 9s., while some of them can remember the miserably poor prices they got for their crops ten years previously, viz., 2s. 3d. per bushel for wheat, and 9d. for maize. Mechanics will also sigh over the times when "trade was flourishing," and they got 30s. for a day's work; and labourers will point you to many buildings in the city, and remark that they got 20s. a day for excavating the foundations of them. In short, few old residents have forgotten those "golden days;" but there are comparatively few who can say that during that season of feverish prosperity they calmly husbanded their good fortune, and wholly avoided the extravagance which was so general.

I beg pardon of my readers for this somewhat egotistical digression, and with a promise that I will not try their patience with any more such interruptions, I would politely ask them to descend again with me to the lower saloon of the "Calabash."

“Och, murther! Iv any mortal man in the worlrd iver heerd a bigger philleloo nor this, I shud like to hear his expayriance, that’s all. This bates Ballywhack on market day all to tater-palins, an no mishtake. All me owld aunt Biddy’s cocks an hens wid a fox in among em cudn’t kick up half sich a cacklin an scrachin as thim say-sick babbies, to say nothin ov thim other racketty little rooshuns, wot aint sick a morsel, wus luck, but are hoping about the saloon all day under me legs, wid their whistles an trumpets, an hapes iv other ugly toys. Be dash’d iv I wudn’t twinty times sooner be cuttin turrf or pullin turnips in frosty weather for tuppence a day thin I’d be sailin in this ballahoe wid double wages, an that’s a fact. Me head’s clane cracked, like an owld crockery taypot, so it is, an no wondher naythir; for it’s Rafferty here, an Rafferty there, an Rafferty over yonder, iviry blessed minit ov the clock. Sorra a bit ov pace could I git iv I was dead. Afore I turn out ov me bunk at four bells in the mornin an afther I turrrn in agin at night too, an all the day through besides, it’s ‘Rafferty! Rafferty!’ jist as if I’d got forrtty hands, an no ind at all iv legs, an a carcass as shtrrong as cast iron. Bah! bad cess to the blatherin haythins, I say, iviry one ov em. Iv I don’t go clane cranky an kick somebody afore long, it ull be a mighty great wondher ta me, that’s all about it.”

The above is part of Tim Rafferty’s soliloquy while seated for a minute’s rest on a box inside his pantry, on the third forenoon after leaving the land. And truly Tim had not slight cause for manifesting pettishness, if there be any excuse at all allowable, for he was beset on every side by helplessness, hopeless muddle, and noise. The unrestrained gambols of the merry little children who were well, the plaintive whines of children who were sick, the frequent application of sallow, mournful-looking nursemaids for sago, weak tea, mutton broth, and other hot slops, which their suffering mistresses expected to be supplied instantler, were quite sufficient to divert any steward’s mind from his ordinary duties; but when, added to all that, were incessant shoutings for Rafferty from impatient male passengers in their berths, each one pettishly impressed with the idea that as he had paid for personal attendance he had a right to expect a larger share than he got, and each one, too, using the brief interval between his retching paroxysms to groan and grumble,—taking all this into account, it is no wonder that Tim felt strong forebodings of going crazy.

“Rafferty!” shouted a husky voice, for the seventh time, from

cabin No. 3, just as Tim had ended his solitary murmuring. "Rafferty! why don't you come here, Sir? I have been calling you till I am broken-winded. I'll warrant I'll make you move a little more nimbly in a day or two, or my name isn't Presto. Rafferty, I say!"

"Comin, Sir, comin as fast as fast as iver I can gallop through this crowd iv cantankerous little kids! I say, Susan, honey! ye'd better be afther takin a dozen or two iv them gossoons on deck out iv me way, or maybe ye'll have a bad job to nuss some iv their broken toes, iv I tread on em. Take em on deck an good luck to yez, darlint! Shure, an a little dhrop iv rain won't kill em intirely, an iv it shud, why— Yes, Sir, comin, Sir, in a single wink. Don't put yerself in such a blather, or ye'll be wakin up Misther Cockee, on top iv yez."

"Why the mischief don't you come when I call you?" asked Mr. Presto, vociferously, when Tim entered the cabin, and humbly asked what was wanted.

"How is it you give me the trouble to shout out in this style whenever I want you?" demanded the sea-sick gentleman, whose face grew as purple as a pickling cabbage with wrath. "Why don't you attend to me properly? You lazy fellow!"

"Shure, an did yez think I am 'owld Nick' himself, Sir, that I can be all over the ship at onst, an close alongside ov yez allers? An how wos I to know ye wos callin me iv I didn't hear yez, at all, Sir? Axin yer pardin for spakeing so plain."

"I'll nick you in my particular way as soon as I'm able to open my mouth comfortably, mark that, Mr. Paddy; and in the mean time, if you give me any more of your impudence, I'll throw this basin at your head. Get me a bottle of soda-water and some pale brandy directly.".....

"Rafferty! Rafferty!"

"Yes, Sir, comin, Sir! be wid yez in a jiffy, as owld boggy said to the vaggibin baker who put bone dust intil his bread. Here am I, Sir. What did ye plaise to want?"

"Bring me a dose of castor-oil, Tim."

"Casthor-oil, Sir? Yes, Sir. I'll run an git it, immediately. Och, murther! an what next will the crathur want, I'd like to know! Not much more nor an hour agone he swallowed a bottle iv beer at one gulp, jist afther ateing a breakfast enough for two turrf-cutters. Ha, ha! dash'd iv I can help grinnin at that ould bloke anyhow."

Thus chuckled Tim, as he hastened to supply the new demand, which was made by a corpulent gentleman named Van Swill, who had reported that he was travelling to Japan to see his grandmother, and who occupied a small cabin to himself, as all such travellers as he should do.

"Here it is, Sir," said Tim, re-entering the cabin in a few minutes, with half-a-tumblerfull of castor-oil in his hand. "Here it is, Sir; an very rich it looks, too, as the soger sed iv the sharrk's liver. It's rale sthrong oil this, Sir, I'm thinkin. I niver drink't much iv it myself, sartinly, but Sam Clink, the stoker, sed it roused him about like a bottle washer afther I gav him close up a tumblerful t'other mornin. What will ye please to take after it, to clane yer mouth out, Sir?"

"Nothing," said Mr. Van Swill, in a solemn bass voice; then taking the tumbler in his shaky hands, he swallowed the oil, and smacked his lips after it, exclaiming at the same time, "That's nice." After nodding an expression of gratitude to Tim, he turned on his broad back with a grunt, opened his mouth, shut his eyes, and began to consider what he should want next.

"Be jabers! an that's the rummest customer I iver served since I firsht went to say, and I've sane some queer shticks from 'Meriky when I wos in the Cunard line, an no mistake," muttered Tom, returning to his pantry. "He allers ses, 'That's nice,' no matther what I take til him. Ha! ha! ha! That last dose bates Rooshuns an bears' grease all to slush. Troth, an iv he ses casthor-oil is nice, I shudn't like to taste what he'd call nasty, not I; but ivery man to his fancy, as the monkey sed when he ate his master's owld wig; an it's no matther to me what people swaller so long as they pays for it honestly. Misther Van What's-his-name is thankful, anyhow, an that's a mighty dale more than I can say iv some iv thim other bhoys as I've got to look afther. Now I think iv it, I wonder what in the worrld the cratur is going to do wid all the tabacky he's got stowed away in his cabin. He's too rich to be thinkin iv kapin a shop wid it, an it's sartin he can't shmoke it all himself unless he's got a pipe as big as a pint pot, an he manes to shmoke all night as well as all day, as soon as he thinks he is well enough to git on deck agin. Och, murther! an is it any wondher that rich men often die iv apoplexy an all sorts iv ugly fits when they have nothin to do but ate an dhrink an shmoke thimselves savage, thin lie down an snore all their blood up intil their brains, which sends em out in the

world kickin, afore they can say a blissed worrd for thimselves ; thin dear knows what becomes iv em at all, poor sowls ! It knocks me right out iv me calculation altogether whin I often see gintlefolks on board ship who have lashins iv book learning, an can talk furrin lingo like black fellows, but who same to have no more notion how to govern their own hungry natur, or to take care iv their healths, no more nor me Aunt Biddy's ould blind mare, not a bit, an that's a fact as gits over me intirely."

"Mr. Rafferty!" whined a weak voice in cabin No. 3, an hour or two afterwards, when Tim was laying the table for the servant-maids' and the children's dinner, in the lower saloon.

Tim, who knew the voice, promptly replied, "I'm coming, Sir," and entered the cabin at the same instant.

"Rafferty, I'm very ill, indeed," gasped Christopher, opening his eyes, which resembled stewed bullaces. "I think I'm going to die, Rafferty; in fact, I know I'm dying, and I feel rather glad of it, for I've been so wretched ever since the ship left Plymouth. You may have all my old clothes, but I want you to carry my boxes back to my—my—my mother. Hoo-o-o! I'm dying, Rafferty!"

"Whew!" whistled Tim; "dying is it ye mane? Tut! not a bit iv it, Sir: I'll take care iv that, niver fear. I wud'nt sell the chance iv yer life for a coal-scuttle full iv suverins; that is iv ye'll ony jist do what I ax ye ta do, or iv ye'll ony be asy, an let me dother yez in me own way. Die, indeed! an what'll yer blessed mother say, iv I let ye do that? Or what'll yer sisther say ta me, whin I git back agin? An wud'nt yer faathir kick me all ta pieces, iv I carried yer boxes back wid sich a yarrn as that? To be shure he wud, an sarve me right, so it wud, to let ye die afore ye'd lived a week in the ship. Bedad, that'll niver do, Sir; so don't yez be afther makin up yer mind ta that same, jist yet anyhow. Ye're not dyin, honey! not a bit iv it: I niver heerd a dead man talk so sinsibly as yer honor, niver. It ull take a mighty dale more thin yer prisent pains ta kill yez, take my experienced worrd for that, Sir!"

"Ah, Rafferty, you are very kind to me, very kind indeed; but you don't know how I feel, and I can't explain my sufferings, they are so horribly peculiar. I was dreadfully bad when I had the chicken-pock, and the measles; and I was nearly killed with cholera-morbus, after eating gingerbread-nuts at Greenwich fair. I can recollect all those sensations, and terrible they were, too; but they were totally different to my pre-

sent affliction. I feel—I feel—poo—hoo-o-o! Oh, Rafferty! I wish I were at home! O my! O my! O my! I am certain I'm dying: boo-o-o!"

"Whisht, darlint!" said Tim soothingly: "don't cry, don't cry! I tell yez ye'll be alive agin in no time, cos it's ony say-sick ye are, that's all; an maybe a little bit iv frittin into the bargain. Troth, an it's no wondher ye fale queer, not at all, cos ye've bin raatching, an yawking, an sobbin, iver since ye've bin on board; an ye have'nt taken a haporth inside iv yez; so iv yez didn't fale queer, it wud be mighty queer to me, so it wud. Sorra a bit or a dhrop enough to physick a cockroach have ye swallowed these three days; an it is'nt bekase I've forgotten to ax yez to ate an dhrink naythir. But I'm not goin to stand by an see ye staarve yerself intirely, for that ud be as bad as murther, ivery bit; so be asy, Sir, while I go an git yez a little dhrop iv chicken broth, an that'll comfit yez betther than a hape iv mother's hugs, an sither's kisses, take my woord, Sir. That's right, honey; cheer up, an larf a little bit. I'll kape yez from dyin to-day, any way; an we naydn't bother our heads about to-morrow. Ye're out iv yer element jist now, as the owld woman sed, whin she tumbled into the well; but niver fear, Sir, jist coax a little bit iv food into yer impty stomach, an kape yer heart from grieving itself to pieces about home, an yer friends that ye're lavin astarrn, an if I don't put yer whole constitution as right as the binnacle-compass, afore Saturday night comes round, ye can jist tell me I'm not fit to doether a donkey; that's fair enough, Sir." Tim then hastened to the cooks' galley, to prepare his prescription for his miserably sea-sick *protégé*.

"There now, me jewel! jist tashte that," said Tim, when he returned in a short time with a basin-full of savoury chicken-broth, and some toast in it. "I'll ingage yer own darlint mother wudn't make yez a nisher dhrop ov stuff nor that same. I pit jist a dust ov pepper intil it, to warrm ye a bit. Now, Sir, shtand by to dhrink it all."

"I really don't think I can swallow a thimblefull," sighed Christopher. "I feel as if my soul had been racked out of me, Rafferty. You have no idea how awfully weak I am."

"Tut! dont I know all about that well enough, honey; an shure wud'nt a carrt-horse be waak, if he'd done nothin but lie down in a dhirty stable, an hawk, an raatch, an whinny for three days or more, widout a lock iv hay or a tint ov corrn, or anythin else inside him to kape his gizzard from grinding itself

to tatters, like an impty windmill in a squall? In coorse ye're wake, I can see that plain enough; but I'm goin ta make yez shtrong, iv ye'll let me do it, Sir. Plaise to rouse out iv bed ontill this box, an take a good sup ov this broth; an afther that I'll help yez on deck, to git a mouthful ov frish air, for that's jist what ye want, Sir. Come out ov yer hole, as the terrier sed to the rat; git ontill the main-deck, an ye'll look as bright as a new boot in no time. Ye may be sartin I have'nt bin tin years steward in the Yankee liners, widout knowin how to trate say-sick folks; an I'll jist tell yez how I goes to worrk to pit the likes ov yez ontill yer say legs. Axin yer pardin, Misther Presto, I think ye had betther rouse up, and lishten to me a bit; an yez too, Captain Whats-ye-name, in the top berth, an the gintleman below yez, I'll give ye a little bit ov advice, gratis; an that's more nor ivery doether ull do. Whisht now, while I spake.

"Firsh an foremost, jintlemen," continued Tim, with the air of a learned lecturer, "the bist thing ye can do whin ye are say-sick, is to git as much frish air as ye can widout cotchin cowl'd; an take a little dhrop ov plain broth, widout any fat intill it, or a bit o' say biscuit, now an agin, jist to kape yer inside from gittin impty intirely, which is allers onconvanient. Thin walk about on deck, or sit still, iv yez hav'ent got yer say legs aboard, or do anythin ye plaise but look over the ship's side, for the fishes to grin at yez. Now an thin yez may take a dhrop ov wather, or a cup ov wake tay an a bit ov dhry toast, or the like o' that; an kape yer spirits up all the time, an don't be thinkin ivery minet ov what's goin on inside ov yez, cos there's not a bit ov comfit in doin that. I'll ingage iv all four iv yez in this cabin was to rouse out an do as I've tell'd yez, ye'd be able to ate pork an peas-puddin for dinner on Sunday; an it wud'nt be a small bit as ud satisfy yez, naythir. But so long as yez stay in yer beds in this little close crib,—an it does'nt smell over swate, I can tell ye, tho' maybe ye don't know it yerself, espically wid the port-hole bunged up as tight as a beer-barrel,—while yez stay in here, jintlemen, sniffin up this onplisant air over an over agin, an takin nothin at all to ate, but half poisonin yerselves wid sother-wather an brandy, ye naydn't wondher iv ye're say-sick, an savage too. That's all I've got to say about it, maneing no offince to any ov yez; an if ye'll jist ax the doether, or anybody else wid a haporth ov gumption in his head, he'll tell yez that ivery worrd I've sed is as raysonable as iv I'd picked up me larnin in the College of Surgeons, Dublin!"

With much persuasion, Christopher was induced to take a little broth, and afterwards to allow Tim to help him on deck to a seat under the lee of the paddle-box, where the motion of the ship was least perceptible. When his attentive *valet de chambre* went to assist him down to his cabin again, about an hour afterwards, Christopher confessed that he felt much better, and was beginning to hope that he should survive his terrible affliction.

"Now jist let me spake a worrd or two ov sinse til yez girrls, an' that'll be a rale trate til yez no doubt," said Tim, returning to the saloon, after putting Christopher to bed, and addressing himself to several servant-maids, who were lolling about the saloon, enduring various phases of sea-sickness, and looking sorry they had left dry land.

"Ye seed, honies, how much bettther that young jintleman looked for his bout on deck; it was like a day's rist to a broken-knee'd car horse. Two hours ago he'd a giv me all his rig-out for my ould hammock, wid a few big lumps iv coal in it, to sink him to the bottom ov the say, for he towld me he wos goin to die directly. Well now, girls, I jist recommind yez all to git on deck too, and ye'll do yerselves a hape iv good, an be out ov my road too; an if ye'll be so lovin as to take all the young kids up wid yez, ye'll save me a worrld ov botheration an bad manners. Take an show the dear crathers the wondhers ov the grate big ocean. Depind on it, darlints! ye're spilin yer good looks wid sittin down here mopin and sighin yerselves melancholy; brathing all sorts iv onpleasantness, and makin bad air worse widout manin to do it. Yer purty rosy faces will look like frosty turnips very soon, and all for want ov a little swate air and sunshine. What an though ye did git a dhrop ov spray over yez now an agin; don't purty flowers look all the brighter afther a spring shower? To be shure they do. Now jist be raysonable for onst an away, jewells! pit on yer owld bonnets an shawls, an scud away on deck for a bit, whilst I clane up the saloon; an iv ye'll spind a few hours on deck each day atween this and next Sunday, I'll ingage we shall see yez at Divine service in the upper saloon, and all ov yez looking as bloomin as buttercups and daisies. Shure there's nothin like plinty ov frish air, as the workhouse overseer sed whin he put the paupers to sleep in an open shed in frosty weather."

CHAPTER VIII.

INTRODUCES several remarkable Passengers, and contains a general Sketch of Life on Board the "Calabash;" with a Record of Christopher's extraordinary Sayings and Doings.

THE main deck of the "Calabash" presented a lively scene after breakfast on the seventh morning at sea. The ship had made rapid progress, and leaving the dreary, wintry latitudes far behind, was dashing along full speed, with warm sunshine tipping the dancing wavelets, and filling the breasts of the crowds of gaily-dressed passengers with gladsome emotions, only to be thoroughly understood or appreciated by those who have been for days suffering the intolerable nausea of sea-sickness. and the minor disagreeables which are always to be expected at the commencement of a voyage, even in the best ordered ships.

That being the first day for a promenade on the spacious deck, there was some little embarrassment observable, in consequence of the majority of the passengers being strange to each other. The feeling, however, gradually subsided into mutual good fellowship, freezing ceremonies or prideful rigidity were not very marked, and a disposition to add to the general comfort and amusement was paramount.

As Captain Toffey issued from his cabin, with sextant in hand, to take the sun's altitude at noon, a group of excited gentlemen gathered round the mainmast, to discuss and bet upon the probable result of the day's work, or the distance run by the ship since the previous day at noon.

"An even bet that she has run 270 miles," said a lithesome, theatrical-looking personage, with a sandy moustache, who had been displaying surprising volubility all the morning, and introducing himself to his fellow voyagers with an easy, familiar air, strangely mingled with swaggering drollery and graceful etiquette.

"I will make an even bet that the 'Calabash' has run 270 miles, or I will bet two to one that she has not run 280 miles, whichever is most agreeable to the gentleman who is inclined for a little honest sport this fine morning," said the fluent

gentleman, whose name was Waggle. "And I will trouble any individual who may be anxious to win my money to signify the same without delay, for our noble Captain yonder has got his eye to his—aw—, that is to say, to the time of day; so be in time, or you'll be too late. *Tempus fugit*, as the Romans used to say; be in time, gentlemen, if you want to do a little 'honourable swindle' this morning, for we shall shortly have a bulletin from head-quarters there, under the port paddle-box, which will stagger our little game, like sudden news of the grand smash-up of Russia and suicide of the Czar would astonish the *bears* on the Stock Exchange. There, you see, gentlemen, our right honourable governor-in-chief has done his little job, and is coming down the ladder, with his—aw— manipulator in his hand, and his face shining like a church clock. The sun is past the meridian, and Captain Toffey has taken its measure. He has taken it well, no doubt, which reminds me that I must take my little measure of be-ar—; aw— stew-ard, I'll trouble you to bring me a pint bottle of por-ter. Must keep the clay moist, gentlemen, or it will crack and totter to pieces under pressure, like a sun-dried brick; ha, ha, ha!"

After that speech, which was rapidly delivered, with considerable gesticulation, Mr. Waggle opened his ivory tablets, and expressed his readiness to dot down the name of any enterprising individual present "for the even bet, or the two to one odds."

The betting then began with great spirit, and much excitement was manifested for the next half hour; at the expiration of which an officer appeared with a black board, which he hung outside the companion-way. Upon it was chalked the latitude and longitude, and the distance run, 275 miles. Another half-hour's excitement ensued over the settlement between the winners and the losers, and then the bell rung for luncheon.

Down the whole party descended to a substantial meal, which might have served very well for dinner, even to a fastidious eater. After that was over, some of the party re-ascended to the deck, and amused themselves with deck quoits, cock-shies, skipping, climbing, or jumping for wagers, and various other games; while others sat down to read or write, or play at cards. Some of the ladies exercised at the piano in the saloon, or on instruments of various kinds in their own cabins. Mr. Van Swill seated himself in a bamboo chair under the bridge, smoked his meerschaum, and winked at everybody who looked at him. Mr. Cotton—a soft-goods gentleman from London, going to the

Cape on special business—sat in his accustomed corner, and studied “Adam Smith.” The Rev. Mr. Racey—honorary chaplain—paced up and down the deck in a brown study, and a long, rusty study-coat; now and then taking a quiet look at his neighbours, while his observant eyes twinkled at the ideas which his vivid fancy supplied. Mr. Comity went to give his usual daily scriptural instruction to the little “Highland laddie” who was looking after his “pure merinos.” Mr. Allspyce—one of the owners of the “Calabash”—walked about the deck, and tried to keep humble; but felt, in spite of his efforts, as proud as the Lord Mayor of London in his new coach. He was evidently elated at the rapid progress of the ship, and at his luck in being a shareholder. His knowing nautical glances aloft if a sail shook in the luff, his punctuality at the log reel from hour to hour, and his frequent calculations of the number of revolutions the engines were making per minute, all evidenced his interest in the speed of the ship, and his desire that she should go a little faster than what even the old sailors called “double quick.” Perhaps he had less regard to direct pecuniary advantages than the honour of the vessel, which had been publicly announced as the fastest ocean steamer afloat, and was expected to create an unprecedented sensation in the colonies, and to “advance Australia” beyond all the nations of the earth, so far as a fast vessel could do it. Christopher was walking and talking with a young settler from Kaffraria, who had had many hairbreadth-escapes from shipwreck, and from wild beasts in the African bush. Mr. Boomerang was playing at chess with a smart young Birmingham merchant, who was going to Sydney to begin business. Mr. Geordie Batch—a much-respected old colonist, who had fed more hungry folks than any other man in Australia—was sitting on the skylight, ruminating on passing events, with his round, honest face smiling like a harvest moon. Mr. Cayman was,—but it is needless to tell what every one was doing; indeed, it is not necessary to chronicle the minor doings of any, and I have only done so for the purpose of giving the uninitiated a glimmering idea of the daily routine of the Calabashites.

At half-past three the loud blasts of a bugle warned the passengers to get ready for dinner, and in another half-hour the same horn, blowing “The roast beef of old England,” signified that dinner was ready for them. A few minutes afterwards the rustle and bustle subsided, and the company were seated in their allotted places at one long table and two short tables in the

grand saloon. Grace was said by the Rev. Mr. Racey, and then the important duty of dining began in earnest.

As Christopher settled into his seat near to the Captain, he remembered with gratitude that kind old gentleman's promise to his dear mother, in that very saloon, "to keep an eye to her son," and his own eyes were just beginning to overflow with emotion, when he was startled by a German steward vociferating in his left ear, "Vot sup, Sar? Pea sup? mug'tawny sup? ogg's tail sup, Sar?"

Christopher replied that "he did not mind which sort," and was promptly supplied with a plateful of rich compound, so highly seasoned with cayenne pepper, that none but a Salamander could swallow it with impunity. The first and only spoonful which Christopher took gave him a violent hiccough; whereupon his new friend, the young African settler, (who sat next to him,) remarked that he on one occasion owed his life to a fit of hiccough. He was, he said, camping one night in an African bush infested with lions and tigers, but not a beast would come near him while he made such a disgusting noise.

Christopher scarcely knew what to think of that story; however, he replied, "Dear me! I should not have thought they were so particular." He then swallowed a little cold water, meanwhile holding his breath, as his mother had often told him to do, and the disagreeable symptoms soon left him.

In a short time the empty soup-plates were removed, the dish-covers were whisked off by the active staff of stewards, and printed "bills of fare," of puzzling length, were placed at intervals along the tables. The clashing of knives and forks which ensued would have smothered the rattle of a steam sausage machine. The *feux de joie* of flying corks, jingling of glasses, and the hum of jocund voices, the frequent peals of laughter, and the gay attire of the company, made up a far more exciting scene than Christopher had ever before beheld,—not excepting the grand dinner at Fishmongers' Hall, to which he was once invited with his father and mother. That was certainly a sumptuous entertainment; but he doubted if there was so much to dazzle one, or such a variety of luxuries, as he beheld before him on the spacious tables of the "Calabash."

"Will you join me in a bottle of wine, Cockle?" asked his young Kaffir friend, whose name was Welps. On Christopher's intimating that he had not the least objection, Mr. Welps ordered a bottle of Madeira, and they drank together in the usual polite form.

Fish, fowl, and *entremets* of all sorts were in due course succeeded by a profusion of pastry and confectionery, which made Christopher's revelling fancy fly back to King William Street, and into Littlejohn's shop, where he had so often dropped in to eat a sausage roll or a Banbury cake, and at the same time to steal a glance or two at the pretty girl behind the counter. But he suppressed the rising sigh with his sentimental longings, and asked a steward for some *blanc mange*.

"Cap-tain Tof-fey!" said Mr. Waggle, (whose tongue had been almost as active as his teeth from the commencement of the feast,) "I will trouble you for a large portion of that superior plum-pudding before you, Sir: aw, I have paid a prodigious sum for my passage in this superlative ves-sel, and I feel, Sir, in conscience bound, to obtain valuable consideration, *pro et con*. Steward, pass my plate, if you please, for a thick slice, *suum cuique*, as they used to say in Rome. Eh, Governor Allspyce! that's the 'swindle,' Sir,—ha! ha! Cap-tain, allow me the honour of taking wine with you, if you please? Ah, Governor Shaver, I'm looking at you, Sir! Will you join us in a glass of champagne? Steward, pass my bottle to Captain Toffey and the gentleman at his right hand—aw!".....

The cloth was presently removed, and a sumptuous dessert was spread on the table as if by magic. Then the oft-replenished glasses were in full sparkle, and wit and humour sparkled too. Mr. Waggle appeared to have a *carte blanche* to do or say what he pleased, and was by far the most popular man in the ship. Had any one but a Waggle even attempted to cool the heads of the company all round with *eau de Cologne*, he would probably have been kicked on deck for his presumption; but Mr. Waggle did that trick daily, during dessert, and the majority of the guests looked as die-away happy under the operation as if he were tickling their ears with a cuckoo's feather. Though some of Mr. Waggle's jokes were ancient, they were laughed at as heartily as if they were the cream of "Punch's" latest issue. Even the select semi-circle in the port-quarter smiled complacently on him, and old Daddy Cotton relaxed his mercantile rigidity, while Van Swill roared like a tickled bison, with ecstatic mouth and high appreciation of the funny fellow Waggle.

In the brief intervals between his paroxysms of laughter, Christopher's mind reverted to his nocturnal orgies in Maze Pond with some of his young medical friends: and while he mentally pooh-pooh'd the comparatively small fun of those times,

he thought of his fond mother's sage reflections on the advantages of the refined society he would find in the first-class passengers of the "Calabash." His present high relish for his new life was somewhat dimmed by regret at having dawdled away or wasted so many years in the hum-drum neighbourhood of Tooting; however, he resolved to make the most of his present fortunate position, and retrieve lost time as much as he could. As he arrived at that decision he swallowed another glass of Madeira, then whispered to Welps that he was very glad he had come in the "Calabash," though he had been repenting of doing so all last week.

When the ladies rose from the table, the brass band on deck burst out "Rule Britannia," which added to the general hilarity, and provoked the following impromptu from Mr. Presto's poetical rival, who did not like blasts from brass bands right on top of his head.

"Twice twenty rampant bulls, I vow,
Could not make such a horrid row."

But his sarcastic epigram did not find general favour. Mr. Presto scowled contemptuously at it, and Mr. Naggle said it was as distasteful as the dried horse which he was compelled to subsist upon when crossing the Rocky Mountains to California. Christopher, however, laughed boisterously; indeed, he had an uncontrollable disposition to laugh at everything in the world; and, by the time the bottle of Madeira was emptied, he felt as rollicking as a tame monkey in a toy-shop, and slyly whispered to young Welps that he wished the state-room doors were furnished with brass knockers, and they would go and have a "jolly lark." Then he got softly confidential, and showed Welps Lizzie Whiffin's locket. She was dying in love with him, he said, but he did not care much for her, because he was told she had called him names. He acknowledged, too, that she was not near so pretty as the black-eyed young lady in the port-quarter, who was going to land at the Cape.

By-and-bye the remnant of the diners rose from the table, and joined the ladies on deck. Those gentlemen who could walk steadily, promenaded to the music of the band; and those who could not do so, sat still and laughed, until their exuberance gradually softened into a disposition to doze: when they adjourned to the saloon sofas, and began to snore. Others gathered round the engines in the 'tween decks, and discussed the affairs of all nations or the affairs of their neighbours, while

they puffed their pipes or cheroots. Van Swill, who was drunk, staggered about, and lavishly distributed Kanaster tobacco to all who would accept of it.

At six o'clock the bell rang for tea, but a marked change was perceptible in the company who slowly assembled to that meal. The spirit of wit and waggers which prevailed at the dinner, and had shone like spangles at the dessert, seemed to have lost its lustre; and some of those stars, or comets rather, as they silently sipped their Pekoe, looked as dim as gas-lamps in a thick fog, while their sleepy eyes seemed to say, "What a pity it is that the delicious titillation of wine should be so evanescent, and that headache and heart-sickness should so soon succeed it!"

But pray do not hastily conclude, dear reader, that all eyes were stupidly sleepy at that social gathering; far from it. In that mixed throng of "first-class passengers" there were many minds of sterling ring, governed by lofty principle, and chastened by refinement. They seldom dazzled with meteoric flashes of fancy, much less raised a roar of laughter by displays of buffoonery. Their general bearing and conversation proved that their minds were richly stored with wisdom, their words and actions were ever governed by good taste and judgment, and their faces were usually lighted up with smiles of intelligence. Temperate in all things, at all times, they seldom or never suffered from the depressing reaction of fitful seasons of excitement or mad mirth.

The evening was spent in dancing, singing, or in other ways, as each one's taste dictated. At nine o'clock the bell rang again for supper, at which there was a tolerable gathering. Hot toddy, negus, and other restoratives of the same kind, soon helped to resuscitate the fun of the funny, and the saloon again rang with laughter.

But Christopher had had more than enough fun for one day, as his dolorous visage signified; and the humorous improvised stanzas of Mr. Presto, instead of making him roar with laughter, sounded as dismally in his ears as the howling of a dog at midnight, and made him more disposed to cry.

A cockney was once crossing in a steamer from Dover to Calais during a violent snow-storm; when terrified and seasick, the poor fellow (who had never been to sea before) rushed on deck to the Captain, and exclaimed in piteous tones, "I want to go home!"

Christopher felt in his heart that he wanted to go home, but

he knew how fruitless would be the request, even to the good-natured Captain Toffey, to put back and land him at the "Land's End;" so he wished Welps good night, and went sighing to his cabin, wondering whether it was the Madeira or the brandy-sauce with the college-pudding that had caused his head to ache so intensely.

After he had clambered to his berth, he lay rolling about as comfortless as a seal in a warm bath; for sleep refused to come to his relief, on whichever side he turned to invoke it. The cockroaches had begun to show themselves too; for the weather was warm, and he fancied a mouse was nibbling a hole through the bulk-head for the express purpose of biting his ear off. One by one his neighbours turned into their respective berths; but he spoke not a word to either. The excitement of the day, with its round of luxurious feasting, and his unusual libations, had affected him strangely. Never before had he felt such bewildering sensations in his brain; but then he reflected that he had never before drunk half a bottle of wine at a sitting, and the cause soon became as palpable to him as the effects.

O ye incipient young wine-bibbers! just released from the parental check-strings; who fancy you have discovered *new* charms in the bottle, and are hugging it to your heart as a reserve spring of joy which will gush forth at the opening of your purses, to lighten life's gloom or to brighten life's sunshine! Try to picture poor Christopher, with his hot hands pressed on his feverish throbbing brow, and think if he is not paying far too dearly for an hour of delirious rapture at the dinner table, for the privilege of making himself look silly and contemptible. Say now, with your judgment unclouded, before your reason is withered by the passion which you are beginning to indulge,—say, Is it not safer to keep beyond the influence of a power so subtle? Is it wisdom to foster a passion, or to trifle with a demoniacal fascination which has wrecked thousands of the noblest works of God's creation? Would it not be safer for the night moth to flutter its gaudy wings in the moist starlight, than to flit giddily about the taper's glare, until it falls writhing in torture, never more to soar above its grovelling position in the dust? Young reader! I dread lest I scare you from my book, by assuming the mentor; but, as I would warn you if I saw a deadly snake coiled up in your pathway, so I emphatically say to you, what Alderman Cockle forgot to say to his son, As you prize all that is noble and good, beware of the bottle, and resist the *first* morbid cravings for its deceitful glow; for as

well might you vault upon the back of a fiery unbroken steed, and, throwing away the reins, think to guide or govern him by word of mouth, as yield to the insidious allurements of the bottle, and hope anon to check its influence on you by your own will.

The increased motion of the ship, owing to a slight alteration in her course, soon added to Christopher's distress; and his loathsome sea-sickness returned, making it necessary to summon Rafferty to his aid.

Tim was rather more tardy than usual in obeying Christopher's call; and, when he did appear, his voice was peculiarly thick and husky. He used a trifle more than ordinary familiarity, too, and terribly incensed the dozing Presto in the lower berth, by knocking him on the nose with a pewter basin which he was handing to Christopher.

"Arrah, be the powers! I beg yer honor's pardin a million times, so I do. I'm as sorry as iv I'd kicked me faather, ivery bit, an that's a fact, Sir. The ship give a lurch just then, an that's what did it, Sir."

The disturbed professor was not pacified by those humble apologies; and remembering sundry other real or fancied slights or injuries from Tim, he promised an early settlement. In short, he threatened to play "old Harry" with Tim before the next night, and muttered in a hollow voice, as he turned himself over to doze again,

"He who dares disturb my sleep,
Will quickly feel his marrow creep."

Muttering apologies and explanations in his peculiar style, Tim left the cabin; but returned in about ten minutes with a tumblerful of hot wine.

"Now Misther Cockem, plaise to"——

"I have told you a dozen times my name is Cockle," said Christopher, wrathfully.

"Dash it all, so ye did, Sir, an I've forgot it agin; bad manners ta me. I ax yer pardin, an I'll be mighty perticular nixt time, Sir. Now, be afther sittin up an dhrinkin this noggin ov elder wine, an atin' this bit ov biscuit wid some lovely curran jelly on it."

"I don't want anything of the sort; the very smell of it makes me worse. Take it away instantly, Rafferty; I am very vexed with you."

"An what for are yer vexed wid me, Sir?" asked Tim, with

an injured look at his suffering *protégé*. "Troth, an I'm ony jist doin what yer darlint mother tell'd me to do wid her last breath, as she wint down the gangway ladder; bless her heart! Ses she, Rafferty, give him a little dhrup ov wine an water bilin hot, when he's poorly, says she; an tell him, while he's dhrinkin it not to forgit to recollect that his darlint sister Sophy made it out ov the elder-berries what grow'd in her back garden. Shure, them's the very worrds she towld me to spake to yer, Sir. I'm thinkin ye must be poorly enough now, Sir, or ye widn't be making sich a pulhalew as yer was doin a while agoone. Tak a little sup now, honey!"

"I tell you I don't want it, Rafferty," said Christopher, pettishly. "Leave me alone, I say."

"Bedad! this is a pritty set out too, I'm thinkin. An what am I to do at all wid the murtherin big box in me panthry, chock full ov bottles an jars, that I'm ivery day ov me life knockin the brains out ov me; lasteways, scraping all the skin off me shins, which is jist as onconvenient? What shall I do wid it, iv yer won't tashte it at all? Troth, I don't know, an that's a fact."

"Do what you like with it," said Christopher; "throw it overboard, if it is in your way, but don't worrit me just now, I pray."

"Wheugh! throw it overboard, eh! That wud be a murtherin shame, shure enough. But don't be vexed wid me agin, Sir, and I'll do jist what ye tell me, iv it goes slap agin me conscience. Over it goes, like a dead soger, thof it's a mighty great hardship, as the whale sed, whin he rin his snout up agin an iron frigate; and I'd most as soon heave over all me own dunnage, so I wud. I hope yer blessed mother won't be botherin me about it whin I gits back agin; for I wud'nt hurrt her faleings, the dear crather, for all the elder wine in her cellar, dash'd iv I wud, Sir."

Tim then tucked Christopher into bed, bade him good night, then left the cabin with the hot wine and currant jelly, winking and blinking all the while like a young angler who had just hooked a gudgeon.

Tim's native modesty, and his fear of hurting Christopher's feelings by disobeying him, prevented his again offering hot elder wine or currant jelly either; but whether he threw those dainties overboard, and the virgin honey with them, is a question which I need not speculate upon.

CHAPTER IX.

CONTAINS an Account of Tim Rafferty and the Cow's Ghost ; Captain Toffey's Story of the live Lions ; and the Interruption of Mr. Waggle's thrilling Story by a sudden Smash on Board.

"RAFFERTY ! Rafferty ! Rafferty !" roared an imperative voice from one of the cabins off the lower saloon early the following morning, while Tim was preparing breakfast for the children and their nurses.

"I'm a comin, Sir, as Paddy Flynn sed to his mate below whin he tumbled off the top ov the ladder wid a hod ov murther on his back. Comin, Sir, in harf a jiffy, or less nor that. Troth, an ye're in a mighty flustration this mornnin, poor crather ! It's a bottle o' pale ale or some sother wather that yere wantin, that's all, I'll ingage ; an one ud guess a rat ud got hold ov yer nose, or ye was roarin for the dochter to cure ye ov the collery mopus. Och, bother, hold yer blather ! ye'll blow all yer teeth out in a minnit.

"An what did ye plaise to want, Sir ?" asked Tim, in an altered tone, as he entered the cabin of the dutiful Dutch gentleman who was travelling to Japan to see his grandmother. "What can I do for yer honor this mornnin ?" asked Tim, humbly.

"Nothing. I did not call you. Bother you, why did you wake me so early ?" grumbled Mr. Van Swill. Then, turning over in his berth, he began to snore again in a style for which he was remarkable.

"Rafferty, make haste this way," said a softer voice in another direction. "Be quick, Rafferty, if you please."

"Yis, Sir, here am I, Sir, at yer sarvice," said Tim, tapping at the door of the cabin occupied by the Rev. Mr. Racey : "What will I do for yer riverence ?"

"I did not call you, my friend," replied Mr. Racey, opening the door, and looking with his usual good-natured smile at the poor puzzled fellow.

"Why don't you come here when I call you, Rafferty ?"

asked somebody else in a testy tone: "I will certainly complain to the Captain when I go on deck."

"Shure thin, iv yez do that same, ye'll be takin away my character, an that an't much good to nobody, dear knows. Iv ye'll ony jist tell me who ye are, an where ye be, I'll hurry ta ye as fasht as a fire-ingin, soh! but I can't have me eyes an me ears in iverybody's cabin all at on'st: an any cracked feller, widout a haporth iv brains or common sinse, ud see that's ray-sinable. Bedad, an I'm thinkin iv I'd twice as many eyes an legs as a spider, I shud'nt have harf enough to plaise some ov these risty tisty customers. I'd forty times sooner be a broken-backed donkey, goin to the knackers in a trap, nor be a flunky in this saloon, wid iverybody bawlin the ears off iv me; an that's a fact, shure enough! Yis, yis, I hear yez, Sir; I'll be wid yez in a crack," added Tim, as the summons was peremptorily repeated: then gently opening the door of Mr. Boomerang's cabin, and showing a face the picture of perplexity, he asked in a very civil key, "Was it yerself as was jis afther callin me, Sir?"

"No, Rafferty, I did not call you; but I heard you called in three distinct places. You seem to be in unusual request this morning."

"Well, skin me iv I iver seed the likes o' this in all my experiance at say," exclaimed Tim, seating himself on the edge of the table for a minute's reflection. "Thrue enough, I niver sailed in sich a tip-top crack ship as this afore, an I niver had sich a regiment iv rooshuns to look afther, naythir; these chaps bate the Yankees all ta wooden clothes-pegs, dash'd iv they don't. I wondher who the mischief it was as called me! blist if I know, so I'll jist let em call agin, as the chateing jintleman sed, whin his butcher an baker tuk him their bills!"

"Rafferty, bear a hand here! do you mean to keep me roaring for yer all day? Look sharp this way, will yer?" growled a very gruff voice in the vicinity of Tim's pantry, which voice he evidently thought belonged to one of the cook's mates; and his ire was instantly aroused at the idea of a man, in a subordinate position, addressing him so imperatively; at a time, too, when he was unusually troubled with other callers, and was rather in arrear with his ordinary work.

"Hullabulloo! an what the plague did ye want wid Rafferty, ye smutty-faced galley-ranger?" shouted Tim, starting up, and running towards the new caller, with his fists doubled-up for a fight. "Rafferty, indeed! bad luck ta yez, I'll let yez tashte

his knuckles, an sind yez yelpin ta the caboose wid yer nose in yer fisht, iv yer not off afore I git alongside ov yez. Dash yer imperance, am I to be yell'd at by the likes o' ye, whin I'm up til me neck in harrd worrk, an as bothered as an owld woman in a coach full ov monkeys?"

When Tim got to his pantry, fully prepared to give a knock-down blow to the presumptuous intruder, to his great surprise and increased bewilderment, there was no person there.

"Blist if I can make this out at all at all," grumbled Tim, returning to the saloon scratching his head, and looking half frightened, and thoroughly cross. "I'm fear'd there's some cantankerous feller's ghost down here, that's a fact. Troth, an I wud'nt wondher at all now, iv 'owld Nick' himself has come aboard, cos there's plinty ov his own sort ov fun goin on allers; but what he'd want to bother me for, whin there's so many ov his own prime bhoys lyin snorin in their bunks, bates me altogether. I can't undershtand it a bit; as the Yankee sed, whin he picked up a Dutch hymn-book!"

The loud bellowing of a cow, coming down the main-hatchway, suddenly aroused Tim from his soliloquy, and literally made him jump from one end of the cabin to the other in terror and amazement.

"Moo—moo—moo-o-o!" roared the cow, as if she were in a very bad temper. "Moo-o-o, moo-o-o!"

"Och, save us all; iv that cussed owld cow has'nt broke out ov her crib, an walked slap down the ladder, inta the 'tween decks," shrieked Tim, turning as pale as a white rabbit. "Kape intil yer cabins, girrls an childers; don't show a leg out here, unless ye want ta be tossed an murdered! Hoy! Tom, Mike, Hans, Rod'rick, all ov yez; jump down here, double quick, an bring big shticks wid yez!"

"Moo—moo—moo-o-o!" bellowed the cow, louder than ever.

"Hurry, bhoys, hurry!" shouted Tim, to the stewards in the saloon above. "What the plague are ye all about? Here's the blatherin owld cow walkin inta me panthry full gallop, an ivery blissed haporth ov delf will be kicked to smithereens in a crack. Botheration! I'll go cranky directly: hurry, bhoys, good luck ta ye!"

Down rushed the whole staff of stewards' mates, with consternation in their faces, and with various weapons in their hands,—from broomsticks to carving-forks.

"Whisht now, boys! be raysinable: don't go that way, or ye'll drive the owld vaggabin wallop inta me panthry, an ruin

me out an out in harf a minit. This way, honies, this way ; go aisy now ; hit her a mortial whack, ivery one iv yez, jist to tache the dhirty baste not to come kickin up her shines in this saloon agin, anyhow. Aisy, aisyy, bhoys : now thin, look out, look out, hit her harrd ! ”

“ Holloa ! holloa ! what’s all this riot about ? ” demanded the chief steward ; coming down at that moment to see what his men were doing. “ What noisy game are you playing at here ? catch the owl, or skittles, or hockey ? What the dickens are you doing down here, all of you, at this time of the morning ? ”

“ Shure we’re cotchin the cow, Sir,” cried Tim, with an excited glance up the passage leading to his pantry. “ Whisht a bit, Sir, we’ll slaughter her, the cantankerous owld baste. ”

“ Pooh ! catching a crocodile,” said the chief steward, hastily walking up the passage. “ Where is the cow ? you moon calf ! ”

“ Troth, she’s in the panthry, iv she’s not outside ov it, Sir ; an ye’d betther look out, for she’s as savage as a butcher’s dog. She’d toss the life out ov yez, as soon as she’d ate a turnip ; so don’t be afther sayin I didn’t tell yez, soh ! ”

“ Why, the man’s drunk, for certain,” said the chief ; going into the pantry, and coming out again in a second with scornful anger in his looks.

“ Sorra a worrd ov that’s thrue, Sir, axin yer pardin. I’m as sober as Ballywhack town pump, ivery bit. As shure as I’m alive, I heerd the cow in the panthry, blatherin away as iv somebody was skinnin her : an if any bhoy here ses I did’nt, I’ll jist give him ”——

“ Get out with you ! Don’t spin me any of your ghost yarns, or I’ll send you forward,” said the chief, impatiently. “ The cow is in her crib on deck, and has never moved a hoof out of it since she came on board. It’s my belief you are drunk, and mad too ; but we’ll soon see what’s the matter with you. Mike, run and rouse up the doctor, directly. ”

In less than five minutes, the doctor was in the saloon, feeling Tim’s pulse, and looking as puzzled as doctors often do when called from their beds in violent haste, to examine patients who are thoroughly well.

“ What have you been drinking lately, my man ? ” asked the physician, with a searching look into Tim’s excited face.

“ Drinking, why tay to be shure, Sir ; wid jist a tashte ov hot wine, what Misther Cockle give me last night : sorra a haporth ov anythin else. I’m not dhrunk, Docther, niver fear.

The murtherin owld cow jumped down intil the 'tween decks, an scared the life out iv me, that's all about it. Troth, it's a raale good job afther all she didn't git into me panthry, or dear knows what phileloo she wud "——

"Let me hear no more of your nonsense, if you please. Come to my surgery with me, and I'll give you a little medicine."

"Be the hoky, thin, I won't take a dhrop ov yer midcine, doether, not I, cos there's nothin in the worrld ails me, savin that I'm bothered a bit, that's all. I'm as sound an as sane as yerself, ivery bit; manin no offince, Sir. Its the cow "——

"Tut, tut! don't annoy me with any more of your absurdities, or I will shave your head, and put you in a strait jacket!"

"Whew! shave me head an strait jacket me is it! Be the piper, it wud'nt be a plisant job for any feller to do that same to Tim Rafferty, soh! Whoever tries the jacket ontà me, ull be straight enough himself afore he's harf buttoned it; take my worrd for that same. I tell ye, Sir, it's as thrue as ye're a doether, I heerd the cow in the 'tween decks, bellowin like a bull; an if ye think it's fair to shave a feller for shpakin the thruth, ye'd betther git ready yer lather box; but, be jabers, the fisht man as cotches hold iv me ta shave me skull, or measure me for a jacket, ull git somethin from this fist that he'll niver be able to sell agin at no price. I'll hit him sich a crack in the nose as he niver smelt afore; an he'll niver relish a pinch iv snuff agin, I'll ingage. Now, honies, I don't want to hurrt any iv yez, not I; still, an all, I'm not goin to shtand still, an be made ugly, an trated like a mad lunatic, widout havin a shy for it. I'm a thrue born Irishman, ivery inch iv me; an I'll fight like a soger for me rights an liberties. So look out, bhoys! mind yer eyes, as the feller sed to the crowd, whin he dropped his pipe intil a carrt-load ov sky-rockets!" As Tim concluded his warning address to his puzzled mess-mates, he placed himself in a fighting attitude, and defied all the barbers on board.

The doctor was about to reply with warmth, and perhaps to order the severe remedies he had hinted at, when Mr. Presto called him into his cabin. In a short time, the worthy doctor re-appeared, laughing heartily, and kindly told Tim to go on with his work, and the cow should not trouble him again.

Tim went to his work with a very serious face, and muttering his quaintly expressed wonderment, "how on airth the cow cud walk straight down the ladder, an up it agin, too, widout

so much as showin her tail, or lavin the mark iv a hoof behind her." In the course of the day it leaked out that Mr. Presto had been exercising his professional powers of ventriloquism, and at the same time paying Tim for the knock on the nose with the pewter-dish, on the previous night, and sundry other scores of anterior date.

Tim, however, obstinately refused to "belave that any mortal man cud make sich a bastely row:" and expressed his firm belief that "if it war'nt a raale cow, it was a cow's ghost, for sartin; an if any bowld crather sed it wor'nt, or had the bad manners to say *moo* to him agin, that same bhoi wud git a whackin thump on his head, as ud make him fancy a cow had kicked him!"

The group of betting gentlemen again gathered round the mainmast at noon, when a considerable amount of coin changed owners, and Mr. Waggle's tongue was as active as a duck's tail. Christopher felt quite proud when his name was written on Mr. Waggle's ivory tablets; for that gentleman's humour and playful eccentricities had become as attractive to the excitable youth, as Punch and Judy, or Jack-in-the-Green: and even when he had to pay two guineas to the ever-winning Waggle, half-an-hour afterwards, the pleasant way in which that worthy pocketed "the swindle," as he called it, almost made Christopher rejoice over his loss.

At the usual hour, the company reassembled at the dinner-table, which was as sumptuously supplied as on the previous day; (in fact, every day throughout the voyage was alike in that respect.) The weather was fine, and the ship was making cheering progress, aided by a fair wind; and the passengers in general were looking pleased, and hopeful of an extraordinary day's run.

Christopher had partially recovered from his late dissipation, and though far from exuberant in spirits, he was not desponding. As the dinner advanced, Mr. Wels again asked him to join in a bottle of Madeira; and, though a throbbing recollection of his last night's nausea made him hesitate for a moment, he did not like to confess his scruples, (or, as he thought, his weakness,) so he assented, and another bottle of wine was broached. After the second glass, Christopher felt his spirits wonderfully improved; and, by the time the cloth was removed, his rollicking fancy for knockers returned in full force; but, in the absence of those street-door appendages whereon to exercise

his larking predilections, he proposed to knock the nose off the figure-head, and wrench the tongue out of the ship's bell; at which proposal Welps laconically advised him "to wrench his own tongue out, or keep it quiet, then nobody would know he was such a fool."

His partiality for Welps had increased amazingly, though that precocious young gentleman was rather blunt, and at times cuttingly sarcastic in his rejoinders; still he was an amusing companion, for he had evidently seen a good deal of life, and was very communicative; and if he told the same stories frequently, it probably arose more from a defect of memory than a scarcity of stories. His tact for eluding the wiles and jaws of lions was even more astounding than the circumstance of his meeting with so many; and the wild animals which he had seen were generally of a much larger size than had ever been noticed by naturalists. That, however, is not a new feature in the experience of travellers, for it has been remarked before that the largest animals and the most monstrous fish have always escaped before their astonished discoverers have had time to measure them accurately.

Mr. Welps had finished a long description of a dreary night he passed in a tree,—while travelling from Pietermaritzburg to Klaarwater,—with a very large lion sitting patiently at the foot of the tree, waiting with open jaws for Mr. Welps to drop into his mouth, when, as luck would have it, just after daybreak, a Kaffir boy rode past, with a letter bag on his back. The lion thereupon pursued the boy, and meanwhile Mr. Welps descended from his lodging-place, and ran off in the opposite direction. Whether or no the lion caught the Kaffir boy, Mr. Welps could not tell, in fact, he never inquired; but he could assure everybody that the lion did not catch him, which was all that he had been anxious about.

After that edifying recital had been shrugged at by the gentlemen and shuddered at by the ladies, Captain Toffey, in his deliberate style, told another lion story, which was substantially as follows:—

"I was on my homeward passage from Bombay," said the Captain, "in command of the teak-built ship 'Rajah Gormondee,' with a full cargo of curry powder and sundries under hatches, and several dens of wild beasts on deck. Among them were two fine full-grown lions in one den, which I was taking home as a present from Prince Jamanjellee to the Duke of Wellington. Well, we had pretty good weather until we got

about the meridian of the Cape of Good Hope, when we fell in with a breeze from the south-west, which freshened into a brisk gale. We had called the hands out in the middle watch to double reef the topsails, and hand the main course; for it was a dark, uncertain-looking night, with hard squalls of rain. After I had seen all snug, and the men were coming down from the yards, I went below to my cabin, and turned into bed. Just then a sea struck us on the starboard beam, but as that was not a very unusual thing, deep as we were, I did not trouble myself much about it; so I hauled my nightcap over my ears, and left off winking. By and bye I felt certain, by the heavy rolling of the ship, that something serious had occurred. I thought the rudder pintles had carried away, and the ship had broached to; so out of bed I jumped, and while I was dressing I called to the chief mate, whom I had left in charge of the watch, to tell me what was the matter; but I received no answer; so I hastily donned my oilskin, and went on deck, and just coming out of the light, the night looked as black as a pitch-pot.

“ ‘How is it you did not answer me, Mr. Gilbert, when I called you?’ said I, groping my way up to him in a bit of a pet. There was no answer, not a word; but he staggered from me, and I followed him up to the stern of the longboat. ‘Why don’t you speak, Sir?’ said I, stamping my foot, and shaking my hand admonishingly, for you must know, friends, I am rather warm if I am imposed upon. Still no answer. ‘Are you intoxicated again, Sir?’ said I. ‘Answer me this instant, or I’ll disrate you at once.’ Judge my surprise, friends, if you can, when I found, by the savage growl which my sharp questions had provoked, that I was shaking my fist in the face of a live lion, nearly as big as a brewer’s horse; and before I could turn round to run, up shuffled another one, larger still, with its eyes glaring like fog-lanterns, and its mouth half opened, as if he were making ready to bite my head off.

“The burglars in the barber’s shop, who mistook the den where the bears were confined for the strong safe where the rich tonsor kept his money, were doubtless astonished when, on breaking open the door, seven fat bears rushed out; or I should rather say they were shocked, and no wonder, neither. I can feel for them. I can assure you, friends, mine was a very trying position at that critical moment, when I discovered that I had not got Mr. Gilbert to deal with; and if I confess that I was frightened, I would say, as the crying soldier in the old song said, ‘O, do not deem me weak.’ I cannot exactly recollect

how I got below again, but I believe I was not long about it.

"Just try to fancy my dilemma," continued the worthy Captain, looking very pathetic. "There was I alone; and as all hands were on deck when I first went below to turn in, I naturally concluded that they were all torn to pieces by the ravenous beasts. After a little consideration, I roused out Tuzzeemuzzee, the Lascar steward, who was asleep in his pantry below, and put it to him in the most convincing manner possible, that he might crawl along the deck, and see if the crew were all eaten; of course, I did not like to command him to go, as he had not signed articles for extra work; but I suggested that as he was of a coal black colour, the beasts might not see him in the dark, if he went without his clothes. But he shivered and shook as if he were frost-bitten, and positively refused even to show his nose above the companion ladder. So I got my speaking-trumpet, and, standing on the cabin table, I hailed the chief mate as loudly as I could roar. To my great relief, he answered me directly out of the mizen-top, and informed me that all hands were safe in various parts of the rigging, and there they all intended to stay for the present.

"It appeared that the sea which broke on board capsized the lion's den, and let the brutes out, whereupon all the sailors scudded up aloft, like scalded monkeys, and the officers after them, leaving the ship to steer herself or to broach to, and wallow about in the trough of the sea, to the great danger of her masts, and all her deck load too.

"It would make a very long story," continued the Captain, were I to tell you all the mishaps of that night. I was hoarse with bawling through the skylight to the hands to come down; but not a man Jack of them would stir out of the rigging, not even when I told them the steward was ready to give them a glass of grog: but one of them had the impudence to ask me to send the steward up aloft with it. They were a fine smart lot of sailors, too, who would have obeyed me instantly under ordinary circumstances, or even if I had ordered them aloft in a typhoon; but they did not fancy coming on deck in the dark, while the lions were adrift. Soon after daybreak, we roused out the sleepy-headed keepers, who soon coaxed the poor brutes into their cage again, when the sailors were glad enough to hurry down from their cold perches and get their breakfast."

"Ha, ha, ha!" laughed the company, all round the table, while Christopher actually roared, until Welps grumblingly told him "he was a nuisance."

"I will take a glass of port with you after that, Capt-ain," said Mr. Waggle. "A very good story, Sir, and very well put together, too. But—aw—allow me to remark, that, had you summoned presence of mind enough to have struck Mr. Gilb—aw—that is to say, the first lion, on his nose with your fist, a smart, determined blow, Sir, and, at the same time, had you spoken to him through your trumpet, and peremptorily ordered him to his cage, it is very probable he would have shuffled away with his tail tucked in, and his mate would have followed him. That is precisely the course I should have adopted myself, Sir, and I have little doubt, in fact, I have no doubt at all, of the result, provided it were done with manly firmness; for I have seen very many remarkable instances of the power of mind—aw—that is to say, of cultivated reason, over brute instinct. The overpowering influence of man over mere animals has been very cleverly demonstrated by my talented friend, Van Amburgh; but I will adduce a far more striking example from my own experience, if you will allow me, and I think you will all candidly say that you never before heard anything so terribly thrilling—aw—I'll trouble you to pass the bottle, Macduff."

Mr. Macduff, a gentleman of high histrionic talent and renown, who was sitting opposite in dignified silence, passed the bottle: when Mr. Waggle, after refreshing himself with a bumper, commenced his thrilling story, to which all ears were attentively open; for his stories were usually of a sensational character.

"When I was in India—aw—I was, on one occasion, travelling from Moorshedabad to Allallahabad with thirteen elephants laden with rupees to pay the troops—aw—of which you have all heard me say I was—"

Crash—smash—splash—boom—bang! went something in the vicinity of the engine-room at that instant, which stopped Mr. Waggle's tongue dead, and filled some minds with astonishment, and others with overpowering alarm; turning some faces scarlet, and others as white as the Greek slave in plaster.

Crunch—crack—dash—grind! continued the awful commotion, making the bottles tumble about the table like little tipsy imps, and shaking the ship from heel to truck in a most alarming manner.

The ever-vigilant engineer-in-chief had hastened from his seat at the table at the first shock. The Captain and officers, too, lost no time in gaining the deck, closely followed by a crowd of panic-stricken passengers. Christopher rushed below for his cork jacket, and, after knocking down two children, and treading

upon several musical toys in his bewildered flight, he appeared on deck, breathless and hatless, with his hair as electrified as a scared cat's tail, or the head of a modern miss, frizzed for an evening party.

The consternation in the lower saloon was not less than in the saloon above. All the servant-maids fainted, except one who had a young baby in her arms, so of course she could not yield to insensibility. The children, with one consent, set up an unparalleled squall, which nearly distracted Tim Rafferty, and made him, as he remarked, ready to go and hang himself, just to be quiet for a bit.

"O dear me! whatever is the matter, Mr. Rafferty?" asked the strong-minded young woman with the baby.

"Och, don't bother, me girrl, good luck to yez, can't ye see all me cups an saucers hoppin about in me panthry, like frogs in a bog; they'll be smashed, every one ov em, and thin what'll I do at all? Bah! bad manners to yez, ye young blatherskins, hould yer noise, or I'll scalt some ov yez wid this mutton broth, in a minute," he roared to the children; then, running into his pantry, he began to secure his clattering crockery, while he thus grumbled to himself, "An what the mischief's up wid the ship, I'd like to know? Troth, I wudn't wondher a bit, whativer the matter is, for iv Ould Nick himself isn't aboard, there's a lot of his cronies here, shure enough, an iv we don't go down to Davy Jones's locker all of a lump, it ull be a pity for the pace and quietness ov Australy—that's my belief, anyhow."

CHAPTER X.

CONTAINS an Explanation of the alarming Crash alluded to in the preceding Chapter, and describes other remarkable Occurrences.

IF my readers will try to picture the entrance of a runaway bear into a ball room, the explosion of a fire-work factory next door to a ladies' school, or any other awakening incident of the sort; it may assist them to form some idea of the scene on the main deck of the "Calabash," when Christopher rushed up to add to the panic.

The engines were stopped, and steam was rushing from the escape valves, with a noise equal to a luggage train crossing an iron bridge. Engineers, firemen, officers, and sailors, were all displaying unusual activity, but what they were doing few of the passengers could comprehend; and the patient Captain was actually out of patience at last with the incessant inquiries of the timid ones who clustered round him for protection and consolation.

Mr. Welps was strutting about with his hands in his pockets, and an air of perfect *sang froid*, which was meant to imply, "This is nothing to what I *have* seen at sea." He gloried in being thought an authority in nautical matters, and appeared particularly happy when he could frighten a group of novices by some improbable story of perils and dangers. He had been twice wrecked—so he said—but had each time escaped uninjured, because, as somebody one day rather equivocally observed, he was born for a more elevated end. He affected to be familiar with everything on board, from swabs and holy-stones to the azimuth compass and the steam winch. He knew every rope below and aloft, and every nut and screw of the oscillating engines. He could tell the approximate pressure on the boilers at any given speed, with the consumption of coal. He could take a lunar, and could tell the exact length of the stokers' pokers, to an inch. In short he was one of those garrulous *quid nuncs* who are to be met with in every walk of life, to try one's patience, but who are, on shipboard, especially disagreeable to their sensible neighbours, on account

of the difficulty of escaping from their interminable twaddle, their coarseness at the table, and their vulgar familiarity, or consummate impudence, which are so suggestive of the summary remedy for quieting yelping puppy dogs.

"What can the matter be?" inquired Christopher of Mr. Welps; who, with his usual knowing look, replied,

"Nothing very important. The linchpin has snapped, and the port paddle wheel has come off, that's all. But I think the stokers are going down after it, for I see they are all getting into the paddle box. This is a mere nothing to the mishap I met with once, coming from Madagascar in a little high pressure boat called the 'Pepperpod.' That was a scaldation affair in reality.

"Excuse me, Sir, if you please," said Christopher nervously, interrupting Welps's story, which he had heard twice before. "But, whatever shall we do if our paddle is absolutely lost? for I don't think we have a spare one on board."

"Why, I suppose we shall have to wobble along like a cart with one wheel. But there's Waggle coming up from the engine-room: he will very soon tell us all the news, for he has had his long nose in all the cracks, I'll engage."

"Now, my respected friends, if you will have the politeness to walk this way, I will give you the latest intelligence from the scene of disaster," said Mr. Waggle, making his way through the crowd, and walking aft. "This way, this way, ladies and gentlemen, as the 'old gentleman' himself is insinuating to you every minute, though you perhaps can't hear him. Come on the quarter-deck, friends, for I cannot put my lungs in competition with those noisy boilers—aw.

"You are all naturally anxious to learn the nature of the mishap, which has so suddenly disabled our noble vessel, and crushed the hopes of Governor Allspyce like an opera hat. Ha ha! But cheer up, my friend! keep up your collar, and look glad. Sorry for all mysporting neighbours here, who have bet extensively on a wonderful day's run,—aw! I fear it will be my painful privilege to pocket a very large amount of swindle to-morrow. Pardon the digression, but I can't help feeling affected. Now, I will explain to you the unlucky state of affairs in midships, for I have just had a private interview with the head of the—aw—the hot water department.

"You must know, friends, that our paddles are not ordinary revolvers, but like everything else on board this superlative ship, they are of the newest construction or style. They are:

fitted with patent feathering floats,—aw! which you will probably have supposed, by the way we have been flying along of late. None of the old-fashioned dab-dab-dab about our paddles; no, no, patent! everything patent, bran new, and first class, on board the ‘Calabash,’ ha, ha!—facts, I assure you. I shall soon come to the important point, friends; but, *imprimis*, permit me to explain that I do not wish to reflect upon the honour or skill of my scientific friend Scott, of Pop-law,—aw! No, no! far from it. That gentleman’s knowledge of the properties of matter, and the laws of motion, is not to be questioned by inferior minds; and, notwithstanding it is palpable that he has slightly miscalculated the ductility, tenacity, gravity, or some other—aw—essential or non-essential properties of certain material used in the construction of the ‘Calabash,’ I will undertake to demonstrate that mistakes of divers magnitude have been committed by great men in all ages. Eh Doctor! what do you say to that?

“To come to the point at once then, the pokers—aw—or rods which connect the feathers of the paddles, are not sufficiently strong, or are too weak, whichever way you please to put it; consequently some of them have snapped, and our port wheel is now as disabled as the wing of a wild duck with a bullet in it, ha, ha! That’s the cause of the racket, friends!”

“If that be the extent of the damage, I don’t see why we should not be going ahead,” said Welps, “I have seen a float or two broken off a paddle wheel, but it has not been wholly disabled in consequence; in fact, I have seen”——

“Just so, but I see you are forgetting yourself again, my young shipmate,” said Mr. Waggles, solemnly, “and that is a little weakness of yours of which I have more than once reminded you, Sir. This is not an ordinary boat, recollect: by no means, and ours are not common wheels. Pooh, common indeed! there is as much difference between our patent paddles and the old slap-dash concerns which you allude to, as between the highly varnished revolvers of Lord Blazeaway’s stanhope and the hind wheels of a farmer’s waggon.

“Well, friends, as that young gentleman has gone to re-light his pipe, I will go on with my explanation,” continued Waggle, with a comical glance at the retreating Welps. “The rods or pokers before named having broken, the feathers, instead of striking the water at acute angles, like a Cambridge man’s sculls, have descended at right angles; or, in more familiar words, they have come spank, spank, spank, upon the surface

of the sea, shaking every rivet in the ship, and every nerve in our delicate frames; and, sadder still, fracturing all our bottles on the cabin table, and spoiling one of the best stories that I ever told. Fortunately for us, our worthy friend Flange, the hot water chief, stopped the—aw—engines very promptly, or it is possible some of the feathers or pokers might have been driven through the ship's side, and then you see—aw—then I apprehend we should have been compelled to take to the boats, and pull home again, singing, 'Row, brothers, row;' while the 'Calabash,' with all our little conveniences on board, was going straight to the bottom of the sea; that is to say—aw—if there is any bottom to it at all.".....

For several hours all hands were hard at work repairing the damage as far as possible. A forge was extemporized, and the engineer's staff went to work with hammers and tongs. Had steamers been common in the days of that ancient sage, Pythagoras, while I received as a fact the story that he first found out the proportion of musical notes from sounds of hammers on an anvil, I should feel bound to declare my belief that he was certainly not on board a disabled steam ship at sea, when he made the important discovery in musical science. The ceaseless knocking and clanging on board the "Calabash" might have stunned Vulcan himself, or satiated the maddest votary of the rapping mania, and scared even the very spirits of discord, too.

About midnight, the engines were again started half-speed, but the next day at noon traces of disappointment and chagrin were to be seen on many faces, and there was a slight disposition to snap perceptible among the servants. Some of the ladies in the saloon, too, looked less amiable than heretofore; and the young lady who daily practised her music and singing for two hours, failed to attract the usual group of quizzical listeners round the open skylight just over her unconscious head.

The imperturbable Waggle was, if anything, more elastic in spirits, which may, in some measure, be ascribed to the little circumstance of his having, as he expressed it, honestly acquired an unusual amount of "swindle" from the sanguine bettors of the previous day. The Rev. Mr. Racey, too, preserved his equanimity amid the general excitement, and as he took his accustomed walks up and down the deck, his placid face seemed to say, "None of these things move me."

Days glided on at their usual rate, and when Christopher had become satisfied that there was no personal danger to be apprehended from the frequent disasters to the wheels, he began to

assume a careless swagger, after the style of his friend Welps, and to wear his best clothes every day, in imitation of a gem-bedecked dandy who sat opposite to him at table, and whose voice was never heard above a whisper except once, when—whilst drunk—he discharged a volley of pent-up oaths and slang which would have shocked a London cabman. Time was of no importance to Christopher—or thus he reasoned—and if they made a long passage, he would have more opportunities of observing the ways of refined society, and seeing life among the lively. Besides, his father had specially enforced upon his mind the advantage of experience; and where could he possibly gain more knowledge of character than in such a steamer as the “Calabash,” with seventy first-class companions, without counting the officers and crew? He actually felt himself five years wiser in the ways of the world than when he left Tooting, and, though he might feel for Mr. Allspyce and his brother owners a trifle, he did not really care if he were six months at sea, provided the larder did not fail, and the ship did not leak. As he arrived at that conclusion, he slightly tilted his “wide-awake” hat to the left side, thrust his hands into his trousers’ pockets, took a peep into the binnacle, and winked at the man at the wheel; then descended to the saloon to take another lesson in “dummy whist” from Mr. Welps and his friend Mr. Cayman, a gentleman who could perform many clever tricks with cards, and who seemed to aim at becoming a perfect trickster; for he was constantly practising.....

Overwhelmed with admiration of the witty Waggle, and a desire “to come out” in his popular style of humour, Christopher ascended to the quarter-deck one day, (after having mastered a pint bottle of stout with his luncheon,) and cracked a small practical joke on the head of Mr. Presto’s little brother, Jingo, who was quietly sitting on the skylight, eating a ribstone pippin.

Now few persons with even ordinary discernment would have mistaken Jingo for a soft youth, though his professional *forte* of *assuming* simplicity to some extent followed him into private life. Christopher, however, thought Jingo was a ductile subject whereupon to practise his virgin wit, and probably it was to improve the understanding of the young joker in that respect that Jingo, a short time afterwards, in an affected simper, offered to wager Christopher a crown that he would not hang by his hands for seven minutes from the lower rattlin of the main rigging, without allowing his feet to touch the deck.

As Christopher was always proud of proving that he had money to lose, he at once made the bet, and when all was ready, and Welps, who was standing by with a stop-watch in his hand, cried, "Now," Christopher seized the rattlin, which was about four feet from the deck, and drew up his legs in anything but graceful attitudes. But he had miscalculated the task, which was not a slight one, (as a few minutes' experiment will convince the reader :) nevertheless he felt his manly credit was at stake, and as "death before dishonour" had become his adopted motto, he nerved himself for the struggle for victory, although the thin tarry rope was cutting his hands severely.

Meanwhile, Jingo had descended to the saloon, and solemnly informed the assembled ladies and gentlemen, that young Cockle had hanged himself at last. Up rushed the excited company to the main deck, when their horror and astonishment soon gave way to loud laughter at, and contemptuous pity for, the ridiculous figure of the smartly dressed simpleton, who was clinging with death-like tenacity to the rigging, with his legs coiled up like a lobster's tail, and his eyes goggling out of his puffed face like ripe gooseberries. Whether he would have hung seven minutes, or have burst a vein in his head and dropped dead, is mere speculation; for the Captain compassionately put an end to the absurd exhibition, and tartly reprimanded Christopher for making a goose of himself.

Were I to particularize every breakage of the patent feathering floats before the "Calabash" reached St. Vincent, and to detail all the unprecedented sayings and doings of the most frolicsome part of the company while the ship was coaling in that port, I fear it would be tedious to the general reader. I have many important matters to chronicle, and it is my study rather to condense than to expand subjects, or I might be tempted to give a full account of Christopher's visit to the solitary hotel, or poteen-shop, in that arid little island, in company with some more experienced *habitués*; to tell how he lost all the money in his purse playing at billiards with Welps; and how, on returning on board in the evening, he was reprimanded by the Captain for being drunk and disorderly. How Van Swill—very tipsy—dragged one of the velvet sofa-cushions from the saloon, and was lying on the main deck surveying the moon, and singing, "Mynheer Van Dunck," when the Captain indignantly rolled him off the cushion, and ordered it to be taken below again. How Van Swill therefore swore dozens of

Dutch oaths, and concluded by a forcible appeal to his friends to help him on his legs, in order that he might kick old Toffey overboard. How Mr. Presto was going to fly from the main cross-trees into the water at the challenge of a capersome young Irishman, fresh from the College of Surgeons ; but was deterred from the mad freak by the entreaties of his brother Jingo, and his dread of sharks. How an old coloured man, (of similar rank to the late * Ricketty Dick, of Rose Bay,) clad in one of the P. and O. Company's officers' left-off uniforms, was invited on board to dinner by Mr. Waggle, and introduced to the too-indulgent Captain and the over-awed company as a Portuguese nobleman. How the poor old fellow was struck dumb by the magnificence of the saloon, the music, and the profusion of luxuries on the tables ; and how astounded he seemed at the manners and customs of the English nobles when he saw Waggle walk round—according to his usual practice during desert—and sprinkle the heads of all the company with perfumed water. How the said company vied for the honour of taking wine with his lordship, until his lordship's eyes grew as dim as stony marbles, and he began to talk rather *too plain* English ; when Mr. Waggle was obliged to assist him on deck for the benefit of fresh air. How a heavy purse of sovereigns was raised in half an hour to aid the Captain and crew of a ship recently wrecked at that island ; how another subscription was as speedily raised to purchase the entire cargo of a small schooner just arrived from St. Jago with oranges and plantains ; and how Captain Toffey benevolently bought all the live stock at St. Vincent, *i. e.*, a leathery bullock, lean and grimy as if he had been fed on old coal baskets. At that time there was not a sign of herbage on the island, though the adjacent islands in the same group were very fertile.

It would obviously occupy much space to narrate *in extenso* all these and many other remarkable occurrences of that memorable voyage, or to follow the dignified and the uproarious through their daily routine of duty or riot ; so I simply record that, after a few more breakings-down and patchings-up, they arrived safely at the anchorage off the interesting little island of St. Helena.

* Ricketty Dick was the *sobriquet* of a paralysed old aboriginal, who for many years occupied a miserable " bark gunyah " by the roadside, about midway between Sydney and the " South Head," and subsisted upon the chance coin which was thrown to him by persons driving along that fashionable thoroughfare.

Some of the quiet inhabitants of St. James Town will probably remember the visit of the "Calabash," and the overflowing purses of the gay passengers who thronged the little town for three days, and entertained the *élite* of the townsfolk on board each evening. The diminutive, bony horses of the island did not soon forget those days of unusual hardship and drudgery, and wear and tear of their backbones. And though it may be questionable whether or not that lion-hearted Calabashite lady has forgotten her venturesome ascent of Jacob's Ladder, or those timorous ladies have forgotten their excitement at landing through the surf, it is certain that Christopher has not forgotten his memorable ride to Longwood on a mule, being, as Tim Rafferty remarked, "The fusht time in his life he had iver rode on a horse. An shure if it war'nt for the honor iv ridin it ud a bin a mighty dale plisanter for him to ha walked; as the sailor sed whin the policemen took him ta the watch-house in a wheelbarrow."

It is needless to dilate upon the well-known historical events which have made the otherwise insignificant little island of St. Helena so famous in association with that illustrious man whose name will be remembered long as the surges shall break on the sullen-looking rocks of his island prison. The last habitation and the tomb of the great Napoleon have been often described by travellers; so I shall merely glance at them incidentally. But Christopher Cockle's visits to these classic spots have not been chronicled before; so in performing that duty I shall be offering something new to the world.

The day after the arrival of the "Calabash," every vehicle and every beast of burden obtainable in James Town were in requisition; and various parties were formed to visit those cardinal points of attraction in the island. Mr. Welps, who had been to Longwood "ever so many times," undertook to be *cicerone* to a party of about fourteen gentlemen, who had luckily obtained nags.

Christopher was most anxious to accompany them; but never having been on horseback, he had some very natural misgivings as to his equestrian skill. After a time, however, he was persuaded by Welps that as he had ridden a donkey two or three times, he could certainly ride a mule; and an animal of that class being available, Christopher hired it forthwith. It was a sedate-looking beast, warranted by its owner to be as gentle and trickless as a young nun. Welps assured him that as the

road was all up hill and down hill, no beast in the world would be fool enough to run away ; and the same difficulties in the road would prevent any of the party from riding beyond an amble or a jog-trot ; so Christopher would be able to keep up with them without inconvenience ; and no person need know that he could not ride like a Cossack, unless he chose to tell them.

“ Lots of snobs pass for good riders who only just know how to sit up straight in the saddle while their horses prance,” continued Welps, “ and there are as many shams in that art as there are in the sciences. Put on a knowing look, Cockle, and you may always bamboozle half the world into the belief that there really is something in you.”

Christopher smilingly promised to look as sharp as possible ; and straightway went to mount his mule.

CHAPTER XI.

CONTAINS an Account of Christopher's memorable Ride to Longwood on a Mule, and sundry other exciting Incidents.

AWAY went the elated excursionists up a winding mountain-road, Mr. Welps leading the van, and his nervous *protégé* in the rear, on the mule, whose name was Nutmeg. Christopher was dressed in an Oriental grass cloth suit, and a white turbaned hat; which was the favourite summer costume of the *ton* of James Town, and the adopted attire of the Calabashite gentlemen.

On reaching the summit of the mountain, they got a view of the interior of the island, which was picturesque in the extreme, and a striking contrast to the sombre aspect of the mere barren looking rock, as viewed from the anchorage. The road was—as Welps had described it—up-hill and down-hill for nearly the whole distance; still there were parts where the horsemen ventured to canter, which was severely trying to Christopher, as his mule followed in a short uneasy gallop, and he felt it necessary to hold very tight to the saddle with both hands, in order to keep his seat. Though his physical chafing was far from pleasant, it was nothing to the mental annoyance he felt, when he passed an open carriage full of Calabashite ladies, (including the attractive young lady from Cape Town;) and he was conscious at the time that his white trowsers had wrinkled up a little above the tops of his Wellington boots. It was humiliating, too, to feel afraid to lift his hat in recognition of the polite salutes of his smiling fellow-voyagers; for, had he relaxed his grip of the saddle for an instant, he would have fallen to the ground like a stuffed effigy.

After visiting Napoleon's Tomb, the party rode on to Longwood, and were shown into the dilapidated house, once the abode of exiled royalty, but which was at that time in the occupancy of a farmer. (I am happy to know that the house has since been purchased by the French government, and rescued from the decay and desecration which was a source of regret to visitors of all nations.) Two Portuguese servants showed the

gentlemen over the building, which was covered, both inside and outside, with autographs and impromptu epigrams, or philippics, in *very plain* prose, expressive of indignation that the bedroom of the late illustrious warrior should be used as a depository for farm-produce ; and that his drawing-room should contain a threshing-machine !

A short time before the visit of Christopher and his friends, they were informed that two French sailors had inspected the house, and were highly incensed at the sight of a heap of corn in one of the rooms ; but, when they saw the threshing-machine, they grew furious, and beat the black servants severely. Mr. Welps remarked "that the French sailors were perfectly justified in thrashing the Negroes ;" but the majority loudly condemned the cruel act.

After viewing the whole of the premises in silent decorum, Christopher and his party were returning to their nags, which were fastened to an adjacent fence, when one of the servants meekly demanded two shillings each, as the regular charge to visitors. To that Welps vehemently demurred, calling it an imposition, and bestowing a variety of inelegant epithets on the poor black man, who modestly, though firmly, maintained the fairness of his claim. Several of the gentlemen offered to pay, rather than dispute so reasonable a tax ; but Welps stoutly protested—"on principle"—against encouraging such base extortion. While the altercation was pending, a black girl was running, with the speed of a hare, on the opposite side of a hawthorn hedge, towards the lodge gate ; and, being observed by the sharp-sighted Welps, he gave the word of command to mount, and ride hard, or the little black wench would fasten the gate, and make prisoners of them all, and their nags too. In a moment they were all mounted, except Christopher, and off they galloped across the grassy slope, in full enjoyment of the exciting race.

Christopher was less fortunate ; for, in his excessive haste to mount Nutmeg, he fell headlong over the saddle, between the legs of the impatient beast ; which, after administering a kick or two to his clumsy rider's loins, galloped across the lawn, elevating his heels, and giving other expressive tokens of contempt.

Christopher was not sure whether the kicks were wilfully or accidentally given ; but he was quite certain that he had received them, although it was unsatisfactory knowledge. He soon, however, rubbed himself into a condition to limp towards

the lodge; and, when he reached it, the black girl was there, holding Nutmeg's bridle in one hand, and the huge key of the gate in the other. She civilly but firmly demanded payment of the entrance-fees for the whole party; and very plainly told him that she would detain his mule until the amount was paid. Christopher at once paid the money, with a shilling extra to the girl; then, asking her to hold the bridle, he mounted safely into the saddle, and prepared to ride back alone, as Welps and his other friends had evidently forsaken him in his first trouble. But no sooner was the gate opened, than off went Nutmeg at a racing pace down the hill, homeward. The trepidation of poor Christopher must be imagined, as he sat clutching the saddle behind and before, like a monkey on a swinging gate, and vainly calling upon the brute to "Woa." The loss of his turbaned hat (which became the black girl's prize) was wholly disregarded in his anxiety for his flesh and bones; as the mule—with outstretched head and tail—galloped down the steep mountain road, utterly heedless of its rider's commands to stop, or else mistaking them for ecstatic expressions of approval and encouragement to gallop on still faster.

Onward he rushed, past the carriage full of ladies again without even looking at them. Onward, downward, neck-or-nothing in his involuntary flight, till he reached the foot of the mountain, when he began to hope that he might possibly escape a broken neck after all, and also began to encourage wild feelings of vengeance against the sure-footed steed, which, by the way,—having been reared and trained by a Dutchman,—did not understand a word of English, consequently disregarded all its rider's "woas."

Flowing through a grassy vale at the foot of the mountain was a brook where watercresses grew in abundance. Into that brook rushed the impetuous mule, eager to refresh himself with a draught and a bath at the same time; but directly he bent his neck to drink the overstrained girths gave way, and off went his rider splash, souse, heels over head into the stream, dragging the saddle with him. The brook, though not deep, was dirty, if stirred; and when Christopher scrambled out, his white suit was sadly begrimed with black mud, and irregularly spangled with duck-weed; while his coat pockets were partially filled with little tadpoles and large horse-leeches.

Nutmeg was out of the brook first, and perhaps having a sort of instinctive notion that his late rider would be rather cross, he trotted away homeward, leaving his luckless burden to

trudge after him, and carry the wet saddle. Poor Christopher was soon after overtaken again by the ladies in the carriage, as he was lying on his back by the roadside, with his legs pointed to the zenith, endeavouring to drain the water out of his long boots. He felt chagrined beyond measure that the ladies should again pass him at that ridiculous juncture; for they would doubtless think he was insane: so he jumped up, put the saddle on his head, and hoped they might not recognise him. The hope was speedily blighted, though; for they presently bowed to him with their usual courtesy; so he was compelled to lift the saddle from his head, and bow politely in return. As he did so he particularly noticed that the black eyes of the pretty young lady before noticed were glistening with tears; but whether they were tears of sympathy, or the gushings over of suppressed merriment, he could never thoroughly satisfy himself.

“Och! be the piper if iver any livin mortials in this worrld cud make a bigger rowdedow thin some iv the bhoys have bin kickin up in this ship, I shouldn’t like to hear it at all, cos they’d be starrk starin mad, an no mishtake about it.”

Thus muttered Tim Rafferty the second morning after Christmas, as he sat on the corner of the lower saloon table to rest and cogitate a little, according to his frequent habit.

“Blist if I iver seed the likes afore, as the marine sed whin the grape-shot carried away his nose. All the fiddlers in Donnybrook fair, an all the pipers in Ballywhack besides, wudn’t make sich a philleeloo as there’s been goin on in this shteamer from mornin till night iver since last Winsday. There niver was a ship in the say so chock full iv music fore-an-aft as this one, niver. Fusht of all there’s thim Germaners, wid their brass horns an tombones. Ugh! bad luck to thim! I wish they’d blow their brains out, so I do, thin maybe they’d be quiet for a bit. Thin that Miss Thingemmee is allers squallin an strummin away at the piannee as if she wos paid for it. An it’s small enough pay I’d pay her anyhow. Thin there’s no end iv fluteenees, guttarrs, an jews-harps, forbye the clock-work music-boxes in iverybody’s cabin. An almost ivery gossoon in the lower deck has got a whistle or a musical cat, or some sich ugly nuisance; to say nothin iv their own swate voices an the iverlastin cluckin an croonin iv their nuss-maids. Ochone! it’s enough to drive any raysonable man clane cranky, dash’d iv it ain’t. But iv I ony kape me sinses intil me head

till I git to Melbourne, I'll be off ov this pritty quick, widout sayin by yer lave ; I'll bolt into the bush, iv I have to ate kangaroo skins, so I will. An iv I don't live till I git ashore, I I shall die aboord, mayhap thin it 'll be harrd worrk an botheration as murdered me, soh, an I'll swear til that——
Comin, Sir. Yis, Sir."

"What is it, Misther Cockle?" asked Tim, entering Christopher's cabin in obedience to his first call. "What's the matther now, Sir? Ain't yez well this fine sunshiny mornnin? Troth, you ought to be on deck smelling the lovely brazes an the sunbeams, soh."

"I am very ill indeed, Rafferty," said Christopher, rolling over, and half opening his bleared eyes, which looked as if they had been stewed in pork dripping. "Please to run for the doctor immediately, Tim. I am afraid I am going to have another attack of cholera, for awfully sharp pains have just commenced."

"Bah! that's just what the big shnake sed after he'd swallowed a billygoat wid crooked horns," muttered Tim, as he slowly walked towards the surgery. "Shure, an I thought some ov yez ud soon want physicking afther the way ye've bin swallowin the galley dochter's mixtures, an it isn't a bit ov wondher ta me that ye've cotched the chollery mopus. Could any sensible man see some ov thim crathurs ate an dhrink on Christmas day an the day afther it, an not wondher they didn't suffocate themselves intirely, forbye breedin a famine in the ship? Ugh! pains indeed! I shud think so; an it's a marcy ye're not all howlin like dead dogs, so it is."

"Dochter Beeswacks, Misther Cockles wants yez directly, if yez plaise, Sir," said Tim, tapping at the door of the surgery.

"Does he, indeed? Very well, Tim; tell him I will attend to him as soon as I have leisure. Here, take this dose to Mr. Van Swill, see that he takes it all, and mind you do not give him any grog to-day, not Captain Carraway neither. Do you hear?"

"Yis, I hear yez, Sir, but I'm thinkin it ull be a mighty harrd job to kape em quiet widout a dhrop iv somethin, as the owld nuss sed when they guv her two blatherin twin babbies to wean. They'll kick up a fine shindy afore night, I'll ingage; for their brains are chock full iv blue divils, poor crathurs!"

"I am sorry you want me, Mr. Cockle," said the doctor kindly, at the same time feeling Christopher's pulse, and ex-

amining his tongue. "Hum—yes, Sir, I see what is the matter with you. It is not so serious as you imagine, and I dare say I can cure you in a few days; but pray let me advise you to be more moderate in your diet after you get over this attack, and if you drink nothing stronger than water or lemonade, you will soon feel your nervous system improved. I was very sorry to see you indulge so freely in Mr. Waggles' champagne punch last night, for I knew you would suffer for it this morning; besides, had you been free from its influence, you would never have waltzed with that madcap sailor, or stoker, or whatever he was, who rushed aft among the dancers, with a dress coat and a black hat on, and his face painted blue."

"Goodness gracious me! Did I really act so absurdly, doctor?" asked Christopher, with a deep groan. "O dear, dear me! whatever would my poor mother say, if she knew it? But pray tell me what I did, doctor, I'm distracted."

"Why, you hopped about in such an extraordinary manner with your blue-faced partner, that the dancers had to take care of their toes; and the Rev. Mr. Racey quietly remarked to me that if ever he were called upon to sit as a juryman on any Australian sportsman who should unluckily shoot you in mistake for a kangaroo, he would certainly acquit the man."

"O my! what a donkey I must be! But was it not a gentleman that I was dancing with?"

"Gentleman, indeed!" exclaimed the doctor, with a shrug. "It is not known who he was; for he disappeared from the quarter-deck as mysteriously as he had appeared upon it, after he had terrified all the ladies. I think it was one of the sailors; but the captain will probably discover him, and punish him for his impudence."

"Mercy on us! perhaps it was Beelzebub, doctor," shrieked Christopher, gazing wildly about the cabin; then, writhing about in torture of body and mind, he vented forth an incoherent string of self-reproaches, mingled with curses on champagne punch, plumpudding, and open tarts, and concluded with an earnest appeal to the doctor to save his life.

Doctor Beeswacks was not at all alarmed at the symptoms of his patient; but quietly returned to his surgery, and prepared a mixture, which he sent by Rafferty, with some special directions about diet, &c. In a day or two, Christopher again appeared on deck, though his feeble gait and dreary visage plainly evidenced that he was both sick and sorry.

A few days afterwards the "Calabash" anchored in Table Bay, and as she stayed there a fortnight, most of the passengers took lodgings on shore. Christopher was recommended to a fashionable hotel, where a dozen or more Calabashite gentlemen also took up their quarters. There, for the first time in his life, Christopher realized the luxury of being wholly free from restraint, and in a position to test the influence of a well-filled purse. Though recollections of his late excesses made him serious for a day or two, he by degrees entered into the jovial spirit of his companions, without being in the slightest degree conscious that he was the standing butt for the practical jokes of some, and a tempting subject for the gambling plots of others. He had not rigidly attended to the doctor's orders respecting his diet; still, he had been comparatively abstemious, both in eating and drinking. Two or three glasses of madeira or sherry in the course of the day he was sure could not hurt him, whatever the doctor might say. As for champagne punch, ugh! it made him shudder when he thought of it, and the mere sight of confectionery gave him a sick headache. In the course of a week, however, he had forgotten his late miseries, and his old predilections were gradually returning.

After spending several hours and losing several sovereigns one evening at billiards with Welps, that worthy proposed to play a finishing game, the loser to pay for a four-in-hand to Constantia the following day. Christopher hesitated for a minute or two; but was soon persuaded by some of the lookers on, and the offers of considerable odds by Welps. He played the game, and, as a matter of course, he lost it, for he was a mere tyro beside his expert and wily opponent. He lost the game, but joined in the boisterous laughter of the company at his own expense as merrily as if he had won it.

The next day a carriage was engaged, when Christopher and four others, including Welps, Van Swill, and Captain Carraway, drove to the far-famed vineyards of Constantia, a few miles from Cape Town. They were politely invited by the owner of one of the *châteaux* to inspect his cellars. In tasting the various luscious wines therein, Christopher forgot the prescribed limits to his bibacious indulgence: he forgot the good doctor's advice, his late acute sufferings and nausea; in short, he soon forgot everything worth remembering, including the use of his legs, and was at length helped into the carriage, singing drunk, by some of his companions, who were not a whit more sober. After a few

little mishaps on the road, they reached their hotel about dusk, all very much in need of a bath and a change of apparel.

That evening, a dramatic performance was advertised to take place in some part of the garrison, which had been temporarily fitted up as a theatre. The renowned Macduff and another gentleman of histrionic fame, with a talented lady professional, (all passengers by the "Calabash,") had arranged to play the tragedy of Othello, and the sober citizens of Cape Town at the time appointed thronged the building, in anticipation of an unusual treat. There were present, also, a good number of the "Calabash's" passengers, including Christopher and his elevated associates.

The three professionals took the leading characters of Othello, Desdemona, and Iago; and the minor parts were sustained by amateurs and supernumeraries, including several of the crew of the "Calabash," while the German band filled the orchestra. The play proceeded without interruption save an occasional nonsensical comment from Christopher or some of his party, until the second act, when, in the second scene, Tim Rafferty appeared on the stage, dressed as a herald, and began to read a proclamation as follows: "It is Othello's plaisure, our noble an valiant jeneral, that upon cerryin tidins now arrived ov the mere perr-perrdition ov the Turkish flate, every man put himself into a *tripot*: some"—

Roars of laughter drowned Tim's blundering address, and were renewed when he exclaimed, with a half-bewildered, half-pettish air, "Dash it all, an what did yez see ta grin at, in that trick? Iv ye'll jist be aisy a minnit, I'll say all I've bin towld to say til yez, and thin I'll be off pritty quick, soh."

Poor Tim was huddled off the stage without finishing his proclamation or his grumbling appeal either, and the play proceeded quietly until the first scene of the third act, when a clown entered, but before he could open his mouth to speak, Christopher shouted out, "That's Dick, the quarter-master!" which so shook Dick's nerves that he forgot his part altogether, and stood gaping like a professional clown with a horse's collar on. Of course the play was interrupted, and Christopher's indecorous conduct so incensed some of the persons near to him, that they unceremoniously dragged him out of the building, and after administering a few well-deserved cuffs and kicks, pushed him into a gutter. He got upon his legs again, as soon as he could, and staggered to his hotel, hatless, and covered with mud and shame.

Instead of filling up my book with the further extravagances of Christopher and some of his choice friends during their stay in Cape Town, with descriptions of their daily drives or their nightly revels, I will ask my readers to re-embark with me, and will merely inform them, by the way, how Mr. Waggles surprised everybody by his nocturnal serenades with his flutina under the arcade of the exchange, and how offended and shocked he was when ordered off by the police, on his attempting to renew his performance on a Sunday night. How Mr. Van Swill paraded the town one night in a real lion's skin, which he had bought from Welps, and was severely bitten in the leg by a bull-dog, which had, very excusably, mistaken Van Swill for a real animal. How Mr. Welps, after winning all Christopher's ready money, pulled his nose for calling him a cheat, and afterwards took his departure for Hottentotia. And how Christopher had to make use of his letters of credit to provide funds to pay his heavy hotel score.

After putting to sea twice, and returning to port disabled, the "Calabash" finally left one afternoon, with all her patent feathers plucked out of her wheels, and rough planks screwed in in their stead. That same night she was plunging about off the L'Aguillas bank, in a gale of wind, with white spray flying over her from stem to stern, and Christopher was rolling about in his berth, as miserably discomposed as a gouty cripple in a runaway omnibus.

CHAPTER XII.

CONTAINS a Variety of stirring Incidents; including the Arrival of the "Calabash" at Melbourne, and the realization of the first Part of Christopher's mysterious Dreams.

SOME of the "Calabash's" passengers remained at the Cape, and several strangers took berths for Australia. Amongst them was a missionary from India, with his wife and young family. He was a mild, unassuming gentleman; and, though he seldom obtruded his opinions upon his fellow-voyagers, it was plain that the influence of his consistent conduct, and his sedate, sensible conversation, was felt, even by the gayest of them; and he was treated with deference and respect by all on board.

The Rev. Mr. Racey had had to perform the very difficult duty of "being all things to all men," and at the same time to preserve his ministerial consistency; and I know not if I felt more sympathy, at times, for his somewhat anomalous position, or admiration for the tact and judgment and the extraordinary patience he displayed. He had voluntarily filled the office of chaplain on board; and, although he sometimes had but a sparse congregation, he took his stand every morning after breakfast, in the grand saloon, for a short religious service. On Sundays, he preached twice; and there was usually a general muster of passengers, with as many of the officers and crew as could be spared from the active duties of the ship. Heartily do I wish that ministers in general could, or would, as readily adapt themselves and their discourses to surrounding circumstances, as Mr. Racey did. As he was bound to conclude the morning service in time for the captain and officers to take their observations at noon, and for the men to go to dinner at the same time, it required no small amount of forethought and judgment to condense the service into the prescribed limits. However, Mr. Racey always did it; and I can honestly say, I have seldom listened to more forcible practical discourses than that reverend gentleman has delivered, within his limit of twenty minutes. Sententious, pithy, and impressive, abounding in striking figures and illustrations, the impressions produced by

those short sermons are well remembered by some of the hearers to this day.

The second Sunday after leaving the Cape, Mr. Racey courteously invited his reverend brother to conduct Divine service in the saloon; but inadvertently omitted to tell him the peculiar difficulties of the duty, and that he must conclude at ten minutes before noon.

The worthy missionary began the service, and read through the Liturgy with becoming deliberation and solemnity: then gave out his text as composedly as if he were in his own church at Goobee, and began an instructive exposition, which an ordinary congregation would have listened to for an hour or more without manifesting weariness. But not so the anxious captain, whose thoughts were soaring to the sun as it approached the meridian; and who was evidently more concerned about his day's reckoning than the final reckoning at the end of time, which the reverend gentleman was so emphatically warning him to prepare for. The hungry "Jack-tars," too, began to smell steam from the cook's coppers, and the yawning stewards were impatient to lay the table for luncheon; while some of the passengers showed, by their involuntary twitches at their watch-guards, and other tokens of uneasiness, that the time for their accustomed refreshment was at hand; and they were probably thinking more about pale ale than of the parson, who was happily unconscious of the fidgetty feelings of his congregation, and warmed into thorough enjoyment of his subject as he advanced.

He had just finished a thrilling peroration, which ought to have engrossed every hearer's attention, and, after wiping his brow, and coughing his throat clear, had re-commenced thus: "In approaching the second part of my subject, my beloved friends, I would briefly remark, in order to impress the solemn facts more forcibly on your consciences,"——

Rub-a-dub-dub! rub-a-dub-dub! rub-a-dub-dub! drubbed a pair of heavy boots, with active legs in them, immediately over the minister's head, just at that moment; making, perhaps, rather more noise than an over-turned barrowful of bricks would have done. He started, and for an instant seemed to lose sight of his subject; but he soon found it again, and was proceeding with "secondly," when the interruption was repeated.

Rub-a-dub-dub! rub-a-dub-dub! went the noisy boots again; which set all the sailors grinning, while Christopher

positively burst into a loud chuckle, after nearly choking himself with his handkerchief, in his vain attempts to suppress his mirth at the comical countenance of Mr. Waggle.

At that juncture, the Rev. Mr. Racey arose, and whispered a few words to the wondering missionary, who prudently closed the service at once; to the great relief of the captain, especially, who was only just on deck with his sextant in time to get an observation of the sun.

I need scarcely say that the reverend gentleman from the East did not make another such miscalculation during the voyage. The sacrilegious disturber on deck was the man at the wheel; who had begun to fear an encroachment into his dinner-hour, and took the not very gentle or decorous plan of dancing on the deck; as he said, "to remind his shipmates below that it was time to say, Amen, then strike eight bells, and pipe to dinner!"

It is recorded that "the ancient Spartans paid as much attention to the rearing of men, as the folks in modern England do to the breeding of cattle. They took charge of the firmness and looseness of men's flesh, and regulated the degree of fatness to which it was lawful, in a free state, for any citizen to extend his body. Those who dared to grow too fat, or too soft for military exercise and the service of Sparta, were soundly whipped. In one particular instance, that of Naucdis, the son of Polybus, the offender was brought before the Ephori, and a meeting of the whole people of Sparta; at which his unlawful fatness was publicly exposed, and he was threatened with perpetual banishment if he did not bring his body within the regular Spartan compass, and give up his culpable mode of living; which was declared to be more worthy of an Ionian, than a son of Lacedæmon!"

Like many other obsolete laws and customs of olden times, that arbitrary cure for corpulence is not wholly devoid of wisdom; though it would doubtless be scouted by any civilized community in the present day, as a monstrous interference with the rights and liberties of the subject. I am not about to advocate its resuscitation: but I have sometimes—when reflecting on it—whimsically conceived the sensation on board the "Calabash," had it been announced by some passing ship that the old Spartan discipline had become part of the laws of Melbourne; for, *some* of the passengers—I am far from including all—had certainly grown too fat for military or any other active

service, upon the redundancy of rich fare which crowded the tables four or five times each day. But the obesity of a few irrational feeders did not affect the general good humour; and, even though some of those gourmands did look rather dim at breakfast-time, they usually brightened up after dinner, and at night shone again like gas-lamps. Mr. Waggle's tongue was never weary; and his fund of fun, and personal anecdotes, seemed as inexhaustible as Mr. Presto's wonderful bottle, or his improvised songs, to the invariable tune of "Jim Crow." The whist-players, up in the starboard-quarter, were each day—Sundays excepted—as busy as weavers, and ten times more anxious to make money. Mr. Van Swill's time was divided between his meerschaum and his meals; with the pastime of getting drunk, and the punishment of getting sober.

Captain Toffey sometimes looked anxious, though he was seldom fidgetty. His friend and co-partner, Mr. Allspyce, began to show his doubts about his shares in the "Calabash" proving profitable, as the voyage lengthened into double the limit which had been so sanguinely prescribed. Nevertheless there was no visible attempt to economize in any way, except in the fuel department; and the unparalleled feasting on the 26th of January—being the anniversary of the foundation of the colony of New South Wales—proved the important fact that the steward was not desponding over an exhausted larder. On that auspicious day all the Australian gentlemen appeared with blue rosettes affixed to their holiday coats, and at night a box-full of sky-rockets were fired off, and a grand ball succeeded a variety of patriotic toasts and appropriate speeches. During the evening good old Geordie Batch (the senior colonist) was crowned with artificial flowers by the ladies, while the brass band played "Molly Bawn." Mr. Waggle was, as usual, master of the ceremonies and manufacturer of champagne punch in a tin-lined plate-basket: of which insinuating beverage Christopher again partook to such an overpowering extent that he had to be carried to his berth pick-a-back by his faithful servitor, Tim Rafferty.....

One morning Mr. Macduff was administering a dose of homœopathic medicine to his friend, Mr. Presto, (who had eaten a disagreeable supper of pickled salmon the night before,) while Mr. Geordie Batch and several others sat by smiling at the solemn process of counting out three infinitesimal globules into a tumbler containing a spoonful of water. Christopher understood salts and senna, rhubarb and magnesia, and other allo-

pathic doses, from bitter experience; but he had never before seen homœopathic practice; so he sat and stared wider than the rest, while Mr. Macduff whirled the glass round for a few minutes in a mysterious manner, then handed it to Mr. Presto, who asked, "Must I drink all that?"

"Every drop!" was the laconic reply of Mr. Macduff, in a deep melodramatic tone.

Mr. Presto drained the glass, and smacked his lips approvingly; then, with a peculiar twinkle of his left eye, he inquired, "Must I swallow the glass?"

"Certainly! I forgot to tell you that," replied the tragedian, in the same solemn voice, and with priest-like gravity.

Immediately the tumbler—to all appearance—slipped down Mr. Presto's throat as smoothly as a castor-oil capsule, and without any great effort on his part beyond opening his mouth very wide, and throwing up his shoulders on a level with his ears.

"By jingo, he has swallowed it!" exclaimed honest Geordie Batch, looking as thoroughly astonished and puzzled as if he had seen the professor swallow a baker's cart; while Christopher's knees knocked together with fear, for he had never before seen any tricks of legerdemain. He had nervously suspected for some time that Mr. Presto was in league with Satan; and the suspicion henceforward settled into a horrifying conviction, and solved the mystery of the blue-faced stranger in the dress coat and black hat who had led him—Christopher—such a mad dance on Boxing Night.

During the remainder of the voyage Christopher sought his nightly repose on one of the saloon sofas, being as much in dread of Mr. Presto as he formerly was of "old Bogy," who, his silly nurse at Tooting used to tell him, always slept under naughty boys' beds. That same injudicious nurse had, by the way, lumbered his feeble young mind with a host of hobgoblin legends, which the strongest efforts of his reasoning powers could not clear away, and he was often subjected to fears and fancies which a well trained boy of twelve years old would have laughed at. It is not improbable that some nurse-maids may read these pages; if so, I would seriously warn them to be very careful what they infuse into the susceptible minds of the young children under their charge, or they may spoil promising men and women, and at the same time help to people the world with pusillanimous dreamers, who will be as powerless to breast the stern duties or trials of life as tropical flowers are to scent the frosty air of Nova Zembla.

I might prolong my narrative of the voyage of the "Calabash," and further notice the comicalities and the perplexities of Tim Rafferty, and the patience of the Rev. Mr. Racey under trials of no ordinary nature. I might, too, give samples *ad infinitum* of Mr. Waggle's droll sayings and doings, and record a host of marvellous tricks of Mr. Presto and his little brother Jingo. I could with strict justice fill a chapter with eulogiums on some of the ladies of the party, whose Christian-like bearing throughout that exciting voyage has won my lasting esteem; nor would it be fair to exclude some of the gentlemen, whose exemplary conduct produced impressions on the mind of Christopher which were not soon effaced. In fact I might easily fill a volume or two with the details of that memorable voyage; and if light reading were desirable, I have material light and frivolous enough, in all conscience. But I must not lose sight of the main purpose of my work, which is to chronicle the experience of Christopher Cockle, and to follow his erratic track as closely as I can. The log of the "Calabash" would doubtless be interesting enough to a certain few; but it would not possess sufficient interest for the general reader; and I should perhaps hazard the useful object I have in view, were I to extend a subject which has, I fear, already grown to a tiresome length. I shall, therefore, very speedily land my hero and his luggage, and break up that jocund party of voyagers which will never be re-united on the tossing waves of time.

The "Calabash" at length reached the Australian coast, and safely anchored in King George's Sound. That same day the Rev. Mr. Racey preached an appropriate sermon in the saloon, from the text, "Hitherto hath the Lord helped us." In terse and forcible language he recapitulated the leading events of the voyage, and the many mercies they had experienced; and concluded his faithful discourse by an earnest appeal to all his hearers to return humble and hearty thanks to Almighty God for all His mercies, and to resolve, ere their feet trod the goodly land of their adoption, to solemnly commit themselves to God's guidance.

From some cause which I cannot explain, the usual means for coaling were not available; so Mr. Waggle (who, by the way, had been captain of a militia corps on board) called for volunteers from his company, and soon a number of gloved gentlemen, with smutty faces, were hauling up coal from the ship's boats alongside. I doubt if many steamships were ever

coaled in that port with more dispatch than was the "Calabash," with her amateur party of "lumpers," thus sustaining Mr. Waggle's quaintly expressed opinion, when toasting his collier corps at the dinner table, in champagne which had been liberally supplied by Captain Toffey, "that—aw—enlightened, energetic spirit generally accomplished more than main strength and foolishness. Or, in other words, as my friend—aw—Sir Charles Napier used to say, 'Blood before bone!' ha, ha! That's true enough: in fact, it has been cleverly demonstrated this very day. The bland smile of my worthy friend at the corner of the table yonder, the—aw—head of the hot water department, proves to me that he endorses the axiom; and he will doubtless tell us when he rises to respond to the next toast, that he never before had his coal bunkers filled in such elegant style, and that he never before saw coal punts discharged with such dispatch and delicacy.".....After three days' stay in the uninteresting port of King George's Sound, the "Calabash" weighed anchor, and a few days afterwards dropped it again at Hobson's Bay, just ninety days after leaving Plymouth.

I here especially feel the inadequacy of my powers to describe the excitement and commotion on board the "Calabash" for several hours after her arrival. Bad news had come on board like a contagious disease, and seemed to have spread a panic throughout the ship, from the state cabins to the stoke-holes. In the first place, it was intimated to Captain Toffey that he would have to take the "Calabash" back to London as soon as possible, and sell her to the best buyer he could pick up; for the prevailing depression had overcast the spirits of the erst sanguine proprietors of that gorgeous hobby, and obscured the bright prospect of a golden harvest of passengers' fees. The good times had begun to give place to bad times in Victoria; (or rather the colony was suffering a reaction from the mad excitement which I have previously glanced at;) and it was deemed hopeless to attempt to make such an expensive ship as the "Calabash" pay: for lucky diggers were fewer, and were more careful of their dust than they were two years before. Moreover, there was active opposition in the steam navigation line, which threatened to smash the "Calabash" and her owners too. Some, indeed, were suffering preliminary shakes, others were shivering, while all of them had their organs of hope knocked flat or concave.

Captain Toffey and his officers, at the startling news, staggered as if their fine ship had struck a rock. The chief mate,

in his first outburst of feeling, pulled the gold band off his cap, dashed his buttons, and said he supposed he should have to take a berth in a collier. The brass bandsmen were so affected that they could not raise wind enough for the grand flourish which they had been rehearsing for a week before; and it is said, by some questionable authority, that they broke down in the middle of "Cheer, boys, cheer," and burst out crying. The chief steward looked as dismal as a hearse driver, and the Jack-tars were as jokeless as dumb Quakers. Hope seemed to have forsaken the ship altogether; and Tim Rafferty declared "he had niver sane sich a lot iv sour faces since the mornin whin Kilgranny steeple capsized, an knocked down the church, an smashed his mother's poor owld donkey intil sassingers."

There was bad news, too, for the passengers to share; and few of the old colonists escaped. One gentleman heard that his agent had decamped to Hong Kong, after selling and mortgaging to the utmost of his power. Another was told that his tricky partner had run his firm to the verge of bankruptcy. A third heard of the partial destruction of a valuable property by flood, and a fourth was told of the total consumption of some extensive buildings by fire. One gentleman, who had come out armed with special powers from a large London firm to wind up the affairs of a large Melbourne firm, came on board again after a few hours' absence, and declared his intention to return to England the next day, by a clipper ship which was on the eve of sailing, as he had heard that the large Melbourne house, or rather the representative of it, had gone away for change of air, no one knew whither, and had taken all the available assets with him, but had left all the liabilities behind him.

A more rueful *finale* to three months' excessive gaiety, or more affecting transitions from princely hopes to beggarly doubts, can scarcely be adduced from real life. Even Mr. Waggle's tongue was struck dumb as a dead fish, and Mr. Presto declared "that he could not jingle six rhymes together to oblige his rich aunt, or to save all his tool boxes from being seized by the sheriff."

Christopher withdrew to the bridge between the paddle boxes, there quietly to reflect upon the remarkable vicissitudes of fortune he had just witnessed; and as he did so, his dream in the icy cold lodging-house at Plymouth recurred to his mind, and the bare recollection of it made him shiver, as though all his pockets were full of snow balls.

CHAPTER XIII.

CONTAINS Christopher's Meditations in the silent Saloon. Tim Rafferty's Mishaps on his first Visit to Melbourne, and his sage Counsel to Christopher.

CHRISTOPHER remained on the bridge ruminating over recent events, and gazing on the large fleet of vessels at anchor around him, and the crowd of boats which were conveying the passengers from the "Calabash" to the shore. As he silently observed friend after friend depart, a dismal sensation stole over him such as he had never before experienced, and he felt as lonely as a little stray kid in a wood. Some judicious friend had previously warned him to beware of the bad characters of both sexes in Melbourne, and in his simplicity he had concluded that sharpers were in an overwhelming majority. Despite his ardent longing for a run on shore he was afraid to venture. Night was approaching, so he decided to wait till the next morning, for he knew no one in Melbourne, (his letters of introduction being to persons in Sydney,) and he had heard that strangers were often knocked down, and that sometimes they did not get up again with all their wits about them.

As the evening shadows grew deeper, Christopher descended to the grand saloon, which was quite deserted, and looked as sombre as an empty church. He seated himself on a sofa, and began to ruminate on bygone scenes in that saloon when the seventy passengers had made the glasses on the swinging trays musical with the vibration of their jocund voices. Notwithstanding the many festive seasons his memory could recall, there was more than a tinge of melancholy in his meditations, and he looked as pathetic as a young lady skinning her poor dead poodle, while he gazed at the silent objects which were fast fading into the gloaming of night.

There was the long table with the empty seats beside it, some of which had so lately been filled with roystering revelers, and there was the cosy corner where the pretty young Cape Town lady used to lounge. There was the piano, and the vacant

stool, upon which so many charming figures had sat. Those strings, which had been strummed out of tune by the daily exercises of that musical young lady with black hair, were as silent as a stuffed skylark. The pretty painted nymphs on the panels certainly looked as bewitching as ever, but what comfort could mere cold shadows afford a poor lonely youth? His spirit sank within him, and he regretted that he had not gone on shore under the wing of Mr. Waggle. However, it was too late to go then, so he stretched himself on the sofa, and being the only really quiet opportunity he had had in the ship for sober reflection, he began to take a retrospect of the past three months; to estimate the amount of experience he had gained, and the pecuniary cost of it.

First of all, then, he had conquered his natural abhorrence to tobacco, and could puff a pipe as free from squeamish qualms as Van Swill or Ben Quidd, the boatswain. He had also, by a gradual process, acquired the power of drinking a pint of wine without staggering, and had learned how to allay or soften the morning shakes after an overnight debauch, by means of what Welps called a "cock-tail." He had learned to play at loo, whist, billiards, cock-shies, and deck quoits, and the way to toss "odd man" for noon-day refreshments. That knowledge had cost him as nearly as he could calculate £107, which, added to his wine score to the steward, and various expenses at the Cape and other stopping places, made up an aggregate of £225, or thereabout, which was pretty cheap, considering all things. Then he had learned a few fashionable and nautical oaths, and a variety of choice slang; beside many smart sayings of Messrs. Waggle, Welps, and Presto, and had acquired a comic song and a conjuring trick from little Jingo. He had certainly not forgotten all the salutary lessons of the Rev. Mr. Racey and the Cape missionary, but he did not care for those things: they were all very good in their way—he thought; but he preferred a comic song to a sermon any day.

"Heigho!" sighed Christopher, when he had finished auditing his profit and loss account. "After all, I have had very little satisfaction in the exciting life that I have lately led, and I feel that my nervous system is not improved by it. I have spent more than £200 extravagantly, that is certain, and in doing so I fear I have often made a fool of myself. I wonder what the old folks and Sophy would say if they knew all the capers I have cut since I last kissed them! And if they could see a faithful account of my expenditure, my goodness!

wouldn't they stare ! However, I cannot expect to be a philosopher all at once, as father used to remind me ; and if experience teaches fools wisdom, I have good reason to hope. I shall try to be more economical ; that will be a wise exercise ; and I mean to keep a sharper look about me, now that I am actually going to launch into the wide world. Heigho ! I feel horribly dull just now. I wish Waggle or Van Swill or young Forceps were on board, or even Tim Rafferty. I must take a little drop of something to drive away these mopish feelings which have annoyed me so much of late, and which are particularly acute to-night."

Christopher then descended to his cabin, drank a glass of spirits, then returned to the saloon, opened the piano, and played "The light of other days is faded," and other sentimental airs, until his soul was melted into tears ; and (as he explained to his sister Sophy in his first letter) "his whole nature was suffused with a softened sadness or melancholy joy, as recollections of home and happiness were awakened by the touching melody of the music, which vibrated on his heart-strings like the twitter of the swallows on the chimneys at Turtleshell Lodge, or the squeaks of his little white mice in the stable."

About midnight Tim Rafferty came on board with a black eye and sundry swellings on his head "as big as new potatoes," to use his own simile. He found Christopher fast asleep, in full dress, on one of the saloon sofas. The soothing influence of the music, and an occasional sip from the source of comfort in his cabin, had at length produced somnolency. On waking, he was glad to see Tim even in his battered condition ; and, whilst yielding to his entreaties to go below and turn into bed, Christopher heard the following explanation of Tim's mishaps in Melbourne, and the cause of his wounds and bruises, and the present dilapidated condition of his apparel.

"Shure enough, Misther Cockle, Melbourne is a mighty place, so it is ! Ballywhack is a fool to it : be the same token, I don't mane to say anythin uncivil about me native town, not I. Will, Sir, I went ashore at six bells jist to rest me legs a bit, and git me brains clear ov the racket ov the ship ; an the fusht thing I thought of was to have a ride in a cooch. So I gits intil a rum-lookin consarn at Sandridge, somethin atween an Irish car and an iron bedstead, an away I jogged to Melbourne. When I got there I was close up struck stupid wid the awful size iv the place, and the mobs iv men and wimen treadin on each other's corns, an the tunderin hullaballoo ivery-

where. I was altogether scared, as me Uncle Dan sed whin he met Paddy O'Trigger's ghost. 'Tare an oons!' ses I to myself, 'I can't shtand this whirllly burly; it's worse nor the "Calabash," 'fin to one, and I'd better make haste back agin, lest I shu'd lose meself out an out. Troth, if I did that same, thinks I, me friends ud niver be able to find me by describin me clothes, not a bit ov it, for some of these rowdy-lookin customers ud strip a feller as soon as they'd pluck a parrot.' So I turned up a back street to see iv I could find a little pace and quietness, for I couldn't think iv a thought worth a fardin. Prisintly I heard a lot ov fiddles at worrk in a saloon alongside ov a public-house; so in I goes, ov coorse, and down I sits, an calls for a noggin ov whishky. Afther I'd dhrinkt it, I sits there, lookin at a lot ov fellers in long boots an red jumpers, dancin like Connaught bhoys, an somebody towld me they were all lucky diggers from Bendigo, knockin down their dust. 'Troth! thin they'll soon grind it all to nothin at that rate,' ses I; for ivery now and agin they'd sing out for champagne, an ax any body nigh to help em dhrink it. The whisky wasn't very shtrong—lasteways, it didn't make me very lively, so I thought I'd have another noggin; and afther I'd dhrinkt that, I gits up to dance wid a crather in a blue bonnet, who axed me iv I wanted a partner. Shure enough, Sir, I hadn't danced half a jig, when up comes a feller as big as a Dutch skipper, an ses he, 'Halloa, Misther Paddy from Corrk! and what the pannikins are yez up to wid my wife? Bad manners to yez, dhrop her, or I'll knock ye intu the middle ov next Monday,' ses he.

"'Yer wife, is it?' ses I. 'Bedad, thin, I didn't know she was married at all, not I; take her,' ses I, 'iv she belongs tu yez.'

"'Take that!' ses he, hittin me a mortal whack in the eye, which made me spin round like a hummin top, and thin down I goes ontu the floor. Up I gits agin in a crack, whips the leg out ov a Yankee chair, and iv I didn't beat a tatoo on that same feller's head, say I don't know how to handle a shtick, that's all. Prisintly up comes up another big feller in a red jumper, and hits me a crack or two on me head with somethin awful harrd; thin dear knows what they did til me afther that, for I can't remimber a haporth ov it. I was afeard the brains was knocked out ov me altogether till I picked meself up in the gutther, where I'd been lyin fasht asleep for I don't know how long, wid a dead dog for a pillow. I was mighty glad I was

alive when I roused up, soh; but whin I come to feel in me pockits, sorra a pockit had I got at all: ivery one ov em was cut clane away. Some dhirty spalpeen stole ivery blissed thing I'd got about me, wid a bran new pair iv brogans and me bist cap wid the 'Calabash' on it in goold letters. He didn't lave me so much as me pipe to comfort me, bad luck til him, whatever his name is. Well, I was afeard he might come back an slaughter me; for that's jist the way the rogues often sarve the poor crathers they've ruined; so I rins behind a cooch all the way to Sandridge, and here I am, ye see, Sir, wid me starboard eye like a ball ov cobbler's wax, and me face tatoo'd all over wid mosketee bites, forbye thim ugly great lumps on me head; so that's all the good I've got by goin catermaulin in thim fiddle shops. But I hope ivery man Jack on board ull take warnin by my misfortin: and when he goes ashore I advise him to keep his luff, an steer clear ov dancin cribs, blue bonnits, an bad whisky. Bedad, I only wish I cou'd say as much as that to ivery sailor in Hobson's Bay this blissed night. But I'm kaping yez out ov yer bunk, Sir, an I ax yer pardin."

"I am not sleepy, Tim, so don't hurry away. I am very sorry for your mishaps."

"Och, don't pity me a bit, Sir! I don't deserve a haporth ov it. I am an old cruiser in the worrld, and I ought to have know'd better than go dabblin about among sharks an sword-fish. Though my head is pretty nigh ruined wid hard knocks an bad grog, I cou'd spake like a spellin book til yez, Sir, so I cou'd, for I've had a dale more exparience nor yerself. Dear knows I'd like to say somethin til yez too, but I'd raathir be lockjawed thin offend yez, that's a fact, Sir."

"You will not offend me, Tim: sit down on that box, and say all you wish to say to me. I shall take it as a kindness."

"Will, Sir, by yer lave, I'll jist spake a small bit ov me mind, widout manin the laste offince in life. Fusht and foremost, thin, let me tell yez, whin yez go on shore, kape yer weather eye wide open, an don't shut yer lee one nayther, or be jabers ye won't own any thin worth winkin at in a week's time. Kape among dacent people, thin ye'll be right enough, Sir; but iv yez git 'ticed intil thim dancin or singin consarns, or thim thimble-rig shops aythir, ye'll pritty soon be settled, take my word for it. Thin agin I'd advise yez to look right away from thim crathers, what walk about under the gas-lamps, wid their faces fizzed up like barber's dolls. Poor souls! I pities em too, but it's dangerous to go too near til them wid yer pity;

so don't you trust yerself doin that same, Sir. They'll leer at yez like a cat whin she's going to catch a birrd. Shure it's well enough I know that too; and didn't I catch it to-night for jist dancin a bit ov an innocint jig wid one of em. Beware of blue bonnets if they've got bowld faces under em, or maybe ye'll pay for it dearer nor I did, soh!

"Och hone! I don't like to spake, Sir; but I'm rale scared for yez, so I am, an I whisht I cou'd kape alongside ov yez allers, for yer darlint mother's sake. Can't I see plain enough that ye're a mortial dale too innocint to be sint away from home all alone? Faix ye don't know no more about the wicked ways ov the worrld than me little bhoys Barney, not a bit, axin yer pardin. I've bin lookin at yez all the passage, thof maybe yez didn't know it; an I've seed how some ov the bhoys on board have bin walkin intil yer money-box like rats intil a barrel o' meal; an, ses I ta meself many a time, ses I, owld Misther Cockle had a mortial sight betther have guv that money ta some poor owld crathers at home who are shivering ta death wid cowl'd an hunger, nor let it find its way intil the pockets ov thim card-playin schemers, who'll jist go an washte it in laziness an mischief. Savin yer presince, Sir, I sed to meself, ses I, if yer faather was soft enough to send yez out ov his sight at all afore ye'd cut yer wisdom teeth, he shu'd have sint yez widout money, or wid ony jist a little ov it, thin ye'd be safe enough; for thieves niver take the thruble to break intil an empty house, not a bit ov it; an ye niver see deçateful shavers blarrney a poor man in the style some ov em have bin lickin yez over lately. It makes me rale savage when I see the like o' that, Sir, an I've seen it many's the time, soh.

"Och Musha! If I could ony shpake me honest mind at this blessed minit to all the worrld, I'd roar out a million times louder than the big steam-pipe. Faathers and mothers iverywhere! I'd shout, whisht a bit, while I tell yez how to kape yer best jewels from bein damaged everlastingly. Don't be sindin yer darlint bhoys an girrls away from home to a furrin land widout a haporth ov exparience ov the worrld, an wid lots ov money in their pockets. Its murtherin em entirely, so it is; an every bit as unmarciful as lodin a poor donkey's hampers wid dollars and turnin him adrift on a common overrun wid robbers. Poor crather—the donkey I mane—he wudn't have half a chance to git away from their pishtles and bludgeons, not he; an shure the robbers wudn't look at him at all iv his hampers were full ov turnips or the like ov that.

"You ought to be able to see what I mane by that, Misther Cockle, as plain as ye can see my black eye," added Tim, grow-ing sentimental. "I shall soon be seein the back o' yez for good an all, Sir; an dear knows I shall be grieved enough about it too, for ye've allers bin a rale jintleman til me, so you have. But I'm quakin for yez inexperience an the danger yer money ull rin yez intil widout yer knowin it. Betther for yez to pitch all yer bags overboard like dhirty blacking-bottles, thin ye'd be forced to work for yer honest livin, and yer woud'nt have time to go skylarkin and gettin intil bad company. Ye'd be a mighty dale happier thin, too, take my worrd for it; and ye woudn't have so many fits ov the doldrums as I've seen yez have nayther. But iv yez won't drown yer money-bags in the sea, take my advice, Sir, an don't till iverybody what ye've got; for there's a lot ov alligators ashore there, as ull gobble yez up as fast as an owld duck wud swaller a young frog; an ye can't see the open jaws ov thim fellers so long as ye've got golden guineas afore yer eyes.

"My honest worrd for it, Sir, there's some ov the know-ing-est-lookin customers as iver I seed in all my life walkin about yonder streets, lookin out for 'new chums' like yerself, an ye'd betther be grabbed by a crocodile than by one ov thim same chaps. As for thim dancin diggers as I run foul of to-night, thim's not the fellers I mane, they're honest enough: there's no harm in thim, ony they're rale tigers to fight when they onst begin, an no mishtake; especially whin they're bin dhrinkin bad whishky.

"Milbourne is an illigant place, sure enough, Sir; an how they built it in no time at all bates me out an out. For sarten there's hapes ov dacent people livin there; I'm not such a hathin as to say there is'nt; but be the same token there's an awful lot ov rowdy bhoys, and girrls, too, amongst em: so I say agin, Sir, kape a sharp look out behind an before whin yez go ashore, or be the hoky! out goes yer eye an in goes a goose-berry afore yer can say Mike. An whin they've bunged yez up so as ye can't see em at all, they'll impty yer pockets, whither there's inythin in em or not; and if yez dare to sing out murther! they'll whack the life out ov yez for yer imperance. That's the way ov the world, Sir; an an awful ugly way it is, soh.

"I won't make bowld to say any more til yez, Sir, an I ax yer pardin agin for sayin so much. Wud yez be afther givin me a shmall tashte ov spirits, Sir? for I'm rarthir dumpy afther

me long run widout brogans. I know yez kape a bottle ov stuff in yer box, or I wudn't ax yer. The vaggibin thief stole the key ov me panthry, though it isn't much ov a prize, as the boy sed whin he picked up a bad egg."

"Begorra! that's awful sthrong stuff, Sir," said Tim, with a sigh, after he had swallowed a glass of pale brandy which Christopher had poured out from his private reserve. "Shtrong as lion's blood that is, Sir, an shure enough many's the time the like ov that has made me as savage as a lion, too. Many a harrd kick it's made me give to my darlint Norah, who's dead an gone, poor sowl; an afther I'd promised like a man to love her all the days ov me life! It's murtherin mixture, soh: an the divil himself invinted it, that's my belief, though I'm fool enough to dhrink it, more's the pity."

"Arrah, Misther Cockle!" said Tim, rising, and looking very solemn at Christopher. "If I waren't afeared ov offindin yez intirely, I'd ax yer to be aisy another minit while I say jist tin worrds more til yez that have come into me head since I tuk that sup ov brandy. But I'm kaping yez out ov bed so long, an I'm clane ashamed o' meself, soh."

"Speak up, Rafferty!" said Christopher, kindly, "I know you will not intentionally offend me."

"That's thrue for yez, honey! I wudn't sphake half a worrd gin yez, if I was kilt. What I want to say til yez now lest I shu'd forgit it is this: beware ov that sly bottle in yez box, Sir, for it's as venomous as the claws ov a mad cat ivery bit. Maybe ye'll be afther callin me a blatherin wind bag, an sayin me advice isn't worth a carrot, bekase I don't practise what I preach. Troth, I wudn't wondher at all what ye'd say or think about it, an I'll forgive yez, too. I know what's right whin I'm doin what's wrong, more shame til me, an I often think I shall catch it by an by for that same. Och hone! I'm a big blaggird, I know that well enough, an I wisht I wasn't, so I do. Nobody iver towld me as much as I am goin to tell yez, Sir, whin I was a young feller, an whin I fusht began to sip at the whisky-bottle on the sly: so the insinivatin stuff tickled me heart an decayed me eyes, that I couldn't see the danger, an the habit ov dhrinkin coiled round me by little an little, till it has got me as fasht as a coir warp, an I couldn't snap it now unless I wor stronger nor Samson himself."

"Musha! musha! the days are past that I have seen; an it makes me miserable whin I think ov em, too: but iv somebody had sed til me whin I was a little ragged-headed gossoon,

—in thim days, whin jist a tint ov the cratur ud make me cough an look ugly—iv some kind sowl had sed til me thin, ‘Tim, me bhoy, that’s deçateful cruel stuff ye’ve bin swallerin, an has cracked thousands ov the soundest brains the worrld ever held, forbye doin no end ov mischief, as any body could see iv he was stone blind. Don’t touch it at all, me bhoy! for though it wheedles yer young feelins all over jist now like woman’s blarrney, by an by it ull wither yez intil a livin skeleton, knock ivery honest manly principle out ov yer breast intirely, capsize all yer narves an yer senses, too, an make yez shake at yer own shadow, like a girl at a ghost. An worser nor all that, it ull blast yer sowl hereafter wid brimstone an fire for iver an iver.’

“Supposin any body hud sed half as much as that til me jist thin, Misther Cockle, do yez think I shouldn’t have sed right straight out like a Briton,—‘If that’s the case, sorra a dhrop more grog ull I tashte while I’ve breath in me, or any sense at all in me head. As for its makin me sthrong, I don’t belave it a bit, cos it’s many times made me so waak, that I couldn’t walk no more nor a prize pig.’ Shuldn’t I ha bin a guffy if I’d sed to the kind friend who tuk the thruble to warnn me,—‘What yez say is throe enough, Misther What’s-ye-name; but I’ll try a little dhrop anyhow: I’ll see iv my young head isn’t shtronger nor them wise owld fellers who you say have had their brrains burnt to cinders wid dhrinkins.’ Tell me, Misther Cockle, shoulnd’t I ha bin a donkey if I’d sed that same? To be shure I shu’d, Sir, an I shu’d have desarved donkey’s allowance ov thumps an thistles all the days ov me life.

“Now, Sir, I’ll jist appale til yer rayson, as ye’ve guv me lave to shpake out plump an plain. Supposin yez seed a lot ov fellers skatin on a dhirty pond: an now an thin ye seed some ov em souse in head over ears, an niver come up agin, while many others sunk down to their middles in mud, an couldn’t wriggle out to save their lives. Wudn’t yez say, like a sinsible man, ‘Bedad, I won’t go ontill that same pond at all at all, not I, lest the ice shu’d crack under me, an daub me all over dirt, an maybe smother me altogether.’ Wudn’t yez say that, Sir? To be shure ye wud; lasteways, if ye didn’t, ye’d be a—a— beg pardon, Sir, I didn’t let it right out.

“Whisht now, Sir, while I show my manin. Haven’t yez bin lookin at a lot ov skaters, an blather-skaters, too, this while past? An haven’t yez had a slide yerself, now an agin? You

have so, Sir, an yez know it well enough: but ye fancied ye've only jist ventured ontill the edge ov the pond where the ice was safe an sound; thof I've seen yez among the flaws, an I've seen yez in danger ov gittin in up til yer neck, so I have. Arrah! look out, Sir. For the dear life ov yez look out, Sir, for it's slippery footin ye're on. Come off ov it, honey! intirely, or mayhap yez may slide right away into the shickery places afore ye're aware ov it; there's forty ta one iv yez iver rache sound footin agin.

"Take my exparienced worrd for it, Sir, there's a dangerous little imp in that same bottle ov yourn—though I've jist bin drinkin out of it—an as thrue as my name's Tim, he'll play the mischief wid yez iv yez don't corrk him up althegether. Ugh! don't I know all about sly nips, an what they lead to? Haven't I seen twice as many poor mortials as this big ship ud carry dash'd down to smash like a runaway cart? Troth, I have so, an it makes me heart ache whin I think ov em all, poor sows! They fusht begun to tippie in the same innocent way as I have seen yez do on board, an they were mighty plased wid the funny fuddle that tickled through ivery vein, until slowly an deçatefully it led thim on blindfolded slap intil the shtrong net ov drunkenness, an there they lay kickin an sprawlin like flies in a cobweb, till the devil rush'd at em like a great ugly black spider, an skull-dragged em down til his fiery hole for iver an iver. Och, Lord save us! but it's an awful thing for an owld fuddler to shpake about, so it is; an it often scares away me sleep wid thinkin what'll be the reckonin by an by, for I've heerd me blissed owld mother say, that thim as knows how to do right an does wrong ull be 'beaten wid many stripes.' "

"Ah! yes; it is a very awful thing to talk about, Tim," said Christopher, uneasily: "I think you have said enough just now. You had better go to bed, for you must be tired. Good night, Tim!"

"A rale good night to yez, Sir," said Tim, solemnly, "an I'm eternally obliged till yez for lettin me blather out what's in me mind, widout knockin me head clane off wid yer washin basin, soh."

CHAPTER XIV.

CHRISTOPHER's first Visit to Melbourne, and his Ride through the City with a loquacious Cabman, who enlightens him upon many interesting Subjects.

THE sudden transition from a balloon into a diving-bell, or from a brilliantly-lighted drawing-room full of beautiful faces and figures to a dark cellar full of coals and black-beetles, would be very uncommon, to say the least of it. Scarcely less affecting was the altered aspect of things in the saloon of the "Calabash" the next morning, when Christopher appeared at the almost deserted breakfast table, and seated himself in his accustomed place, after mournfully saluting Captain Toffey and his officers, whose faces plainly indicated the depression on their hearts.

Christopher had risen from his bed unrefreshed; for he had scarcely slept at all during the night, from various causes, not the least of which were Tim's monitory remarks, that had kept his mind in a tumult of excitement. The significant rattling of earthenware whenever he handled his cup and saucer proved the correctness of his confession to Tim, "That he felt all of a twitter." He scarcely ventured to gaze along the dismal-looking tables, with the vacant seats beside them; for a great lump of grief rose up in his throat, which hot coffee would not wash down, and he was compelled to gaze intently at the curried fowl on his plate, which, alas, he could not swallow, in order to check the gathering tears, which, had they burst forth, would doubtless have had a sympathetic influence on those around him; and a company of crying sailors would indeed have been a sight, as novel and as awfully grand as a marching regiment of foot soldiers in black dress coats.

The usual after-breakfast prayers were dispensed with, for the Rev. Mr. Racey was on shore: so Christopher retired to his cabin, and, after carefully surveying himself in his best apparel, was about to go on shore too, when Tim Rafferty, humbly touching his forelock, asked permission to "spake jist tin worrds

ta him in private," whereupon Christopher retired to his cabin, and rather testily told Tim to speak out.

"I ax yer pardin no end ov times, Sir," said the anxious Irishman, "I'm rale sorry for stoppin' yez, as the thief sed to the parson wid his tithe-bag on his back, but I don't want yer friends ta say I didn't thry me best to take good care ov yez, afther I towld em I would trate yez as tinderly as a babby. Ye mane to go ashore by yerself, Sir, an sorry enough am I to see it, for I fear ye'll find more rogues nor honest men to bid ye welcome; but maybe iv I offered to go wid yez, ta take care ov yez, ye wouldn't think me much good, after the shockin bad way I tuk care ov meself last night. I've been thinking what a gorf I wor to forgit to axe ye whin ye were lyin in yer berth say-sick, wid nothin at all to amuse ye, to let me tatoo yer name on yer arm, wid an anchor or a mermaid, or anything else ye fancied. I'm rale sorry I did'nt do that same, for it wud ha been mighty handy to yez in a savage counthry; for supposin ye wer robbed ov yer clothes, and beat as black as a nigger, so as nobody wud know ye at all, what wud ye do thin? espacially iv ye was knocked spachless, too. My worrd, Sir, there's nothin bates a little bit of tatoo, as ivery sailor knows; that bothers the bodysnatchers intirely, for a ton of soap wudn't wash out a single dot as big as a flea-bite. Howsomever, there's not time to do it now, so it's no good blathering about it; but look here, Sir, I've put a lanyard ontill one ov yer labels, an iv ye'll be afther puttin that round yer neck, maybe it'll be as good as a life-buoy to yez, iv ye git among the breakers; an suppose ye git murdered"——

"Tut, tut!" interrupted Christopher, hastily turning away when Tim presented a parchment luggage label, to which he had affixed a piece of marline, "I won't allow these ridiculous liberties, Rafferty. What in the world do you take me for?"

"Dear knows I wudn't take ye for nothin at all, as the cab-man said to the fat Frenchman. I don't mane the laste offince in life; it's love, and nothin at all else, that makes me spake up so bould, anybody can see that plain enough. Iv ye wor picked up in the gutther, an buried like a pauper, how wud ye like it, Sir? an how wud I show me nose to yer friends agin as long as I lived? Arrah, don't be vexed wid me for spaking ta yez, Misther Cockle, but shure it wudn't be much thruble for yez to sling this consarn under yer weskit, honey! Troth, I'd carry a tiller chain round me neck, wid a grindstone hanging til it, iv yez axed me ta oblige ye that much, so I wud."

"Well, well, hand it here, Tim," said Christopher, softened by the poor fellow's earnestness, then, passing the lanyard round his neck, he buttoned his vest over it, bade Tim good-bye, and descended into the little ferry steamer alongside, which was laden with passengers' luggage. Leaving the expansive waters of Hobson's Bay, (where lay at anchor a large fleet of ships from various parts of the world,) the steamer was soon paddling up the Yarra Yarra river, which Christopher remarked was not half the width of the Thames below bridge; though its waters were similar in colour and consistency to that celebrated London stream. He did not see the Yarra above bridge, where the water is clear and pellucid, and the scenery on its banks extremely picturesque.

Hundreds of small tents were, at that time, erected on Emerald Hill, chiefly as temporary residences for the purchasers or lessees of building allotments, but which Christopher supposed were owned by gold diggers, who were busy shovelling up "the dust" beside their tents; and he noted that opinion forthwith, as well as sundry other opinions on things in general, equally valuable as information for friends afar off, and quite as correct as some of the startling observations of other travellers who have paid flying visits to Australia.

After stepping ashore on the Queen's wharf, he was struck very small by the unexpected throng of busy folks around him. He had proudly anticipated creating a little sensation as one of the Calabash's cabin passengers, instead of which he excited no more attention or respect than if he had arrived seven years before in a common vessel. There he stood, staring about him with wonder-stricken countenance, like a country clown in a picture gallery. Presently a gruff voice near his left ear made him start, as though struck by a stingaree's tail: "Hallo, governor, mind yer eye."

He turned round instantly, and was nearly knocked on the nose by a pine plank which a sailor was carrying ashore from a vessel at the quay. Scarcely had he recovered that shock, when another rough voice on the other side of him warned him to take care of his toes, which he found were in danger of being run over by the iron wheel of a truck upon which a lumper was wheeling two sacks of potatoes. In avoiding that peril, he staggered up against a stack of wet hides, and made some unsightly marks on his new trowsers, which he vainly tried to rub out with his cambric handkerchief.

"Whichever is the way out of this muddle!" he muttered

finding himself hemmed in amidst stacks of grain bags, boxes of fruit, and piles of produce of various other kinds, colonial and foreign. "Hoy, my man! which is the way to Melbourne?"

"Here you are, Sir!" shouted a car-driver, who saw the dilemma of the forlorn youth. "Want a car, Sir? This way, Sir; jump over that coop of fowls."

Christopher followed the direction, and soon found himself on the margin of a very muddy roadway, and surrounded by cabmen all willing to drive anywhere he liked to name. His brain whirled with excitement, and it was with great difficulty he restrained his tears.

"Now then, Sir, here you are; jump into my car. I hailed you first," said a cabman with an honest-looking face, as he drew his vehicle close up to where Christopher was standing. "Jump in, Sir; you can't walk away from this without getting up to your knees in mud."

Christopher obeyed mechanically, and the cabman drove off, but stopped opposite the railway-station to inquire "where his fare wished to go."

Luckily, an idea remained in Christopher's head which suggested that he would see more of the great city, in his limited time, by riding than he could possibly do on foot, and he would escape the jostle of the crowded pathways. So he made a bargain with the cabman for the hire of his conveyance at seven shillings per hour; then seating himself beside the driver for sociality's sake, he bade him drive slowly all over the city, but to take the quietest streets first, and to stop at anything that was specially worthy of notice.

Away they jogged towards the University, which was then in course of erection. When Christopher had become somewhat composed, he began a conversation by asking the cabman how long he had been in the colony.

"Going on for three years, Sir," said the man, who was very loquacious; and, by making a sort of running commentary upon every remarkable person or object they passed, showed his willingness to give his fare all the information he could.

"One might fancy that all the most bustling people in the world had congregated in Melbourne," remarked Christopher. "I am surprised to see so many people walking about the city, for I fancied almost every one would be hard at work in the gold-fields. How is it that you are driving a cab instead of digging for gold?"

The cabman smiled, and said, "Gold is not so easy to get

now, Sir, as it was a year or two ago ; and it costs a good deal of silver to get at it. Not but what there is plenty of the dust left, but it isn't to be got by scrambling for it with tin dishes, and cradles, and other rough tools, because most of the surface stuff on the old diggings is washed out, and you have to dig deep and tunnel and break into reefs, and all that sort of thing, so that a fellow single-handed can't do much good on his own hook, though he may earn pretty good wages by working for masters who have machinery and capital to work it. I have had a try at the diggings, Sir."

"Have you? And were you at all successful?"

"Why, middling, Sir ; for digging does not suit every one. I have seen many poor fellows who thought it was a rosy game, as easy as raking among flower-roots in a garden, but who have found themselves awfully mistaken ; and they won't forget it as long as they live. Working in wet claims all day, and roughing it at night in tents in all sorts of weather, is very trying to the constitutions of persons who have been brought up to light indoor trades. Many such persons have rushed to the diggings without knowing what they were about, and all they got for their pains, poor fellows, was rheumatism in their bones, or consumption on their lungs, and an everlasting horror for shovels and pickaxes. But I will tell you how I got on, Sir. I worked my passage out in the clipper ship 'Shallaballar,' and when I landed I had a few pounds in my pocket, which I earned doing odd jobs for passengers on the voyage. There was a lot of young fellows in the first cabin, who had come out for the purpose of going to the diggings, so I made a bargain to go with them to cook for them and look after their tent while they were picking up gold. There were seven of them, and they had all sorts of things in their kit, so that they were obliged to buy four horses and two carts to carry their swags, half of which were of no more use than muslin nose-bags. Well, Sir, off we went to Bendigo, and when we got there my masters took out claims and begun to work. But, bless your heart, they were no more fit for diggers than I'm fit for a lawyer, for not one of them had ever handled a tool heavier than a yardstick or a steel pen ; so, of course they soon got knocked up, and were glad to sell their claims, tools, and all their useless swag. They sold one of their carts, too, and then drove themselves back to Melbourne in the other one."

"Dear me ; and what did they do then ?" asked Christopher, who was much interested in the story.

"I can't exactly tell you what all of them did, Sir; but two of them had to go into the hospital with rheumatic fever, and I believe they died there. Other two of them got situations as shopmen in Melbourne, and one of them is now a waiter at the Criterion Hotel. I don't know what became of the others, but it is likely enough they drank themselves to death, as hundreds of young men have done, for they were very racketty on board ship. It is hard to tell what becomes of young fellows when you once lose sight of them in this place, Sir; they take kangaroo jumps to ruin when they begin to turn out wild; and when once they get down on their luck, as they call it, not above one in a dozen rises up again. It would astonish you to see what I have seen, Sir: in fact, you would hardly believe your own eyes. I knew a young man at the diggings, real clever fellow, with his brain full of algebra, and all sorts of superior gumption. He got into a lucky claim, and made a good 'pile' in a very short time; but he 'knocked it down,' as the saying is, in far less time. Nothing less than champagne at a guinea a bottle would suit him; and real physic some of that stuff is, too. He would call for a case at a time, then break the bottles into a bucket for any one to drink who chose to do so. At the end of a week he had delirium tremens; and at the end of another week he was in his grave, cut his throat, Sir. But that's nothing to some yarns I could tell you of."

"I would rather not hear any more of that just now," said Christopher, with a shrug. "Tell me what you did when your masters gave up digging."

"Why, Sir, they paid me my wages honourably; so I hired two young Scotchmen, real steady fellows, and tigers to work. But none of us knew much about gold-digging, for my new masters were sailors, and I was only a groom before I left London; besides, we had a bad claim, or so we thought. But we worked away: and though we often saw fellows near to us dig out great nuggets, we never saw the colour of gold in our hole for many weeks; until, one morning, while I was frying breakfast, one of my masters hit upon a great lump of the real stuff, and came out of the hole jumping for joy. 'Hurrah!' said he, 'here's a prize at last: this will help to make a merry Christmas for somebody far away!' So we went to work again like firemen, hardly stopping to eat our meals, and scarcely sleeping a wink for three nights, thinking about what we might hit upon next morning: and that's the worst of a digger's life, Sir, it is so exciting; it wears a man out in no time."

"Well, Sir, while we were expecting the very best sort of luck, all at once, down we came upon the rock, one morning just after daylight. 'Hulloa!' said one of my masters, 'shiver my timbers! here's bad luck again!' 'O, bother it!' cried the other one; 'I hate rocks, ever since I run upon 'Nobbys,' at Newcastle. I have nearly broken my heart with digging dirt, and I should certainly break my back before I had dug half-a-fathom into that hard bluestone; so I propose to give it up for a bad job.' 'Agreed on,' cried his mate: and I can tell you I was not sorry. So they sold the tools to a dealer for next-to-nothing, and sold the nugget for ninety pounds; then paid me my wages fair and square, with something over, and away we all tramped to Melbourne, precious glad to turn our backs on the diggings. But what do you think, Sir? the fellows who jumped our hole, after we gave it up, actually found a nest of nuggets under the very rock that we had been for weeks working down to. It appears we left the claim just when it was becoming valuable; and, if we had stuck to it, we should very likely have made our fortunes right off. But we didn't know anything about gold-digging; and the very fellows who jumped our claim, had made us believe the hole was no good, or what they called a 'shicer!' That shows that a man ought to understand his business, or whatever it is he turns his hand too, don't it, Sir?"

"Yes, that it does;" said Christopher, with a small sigh. "But what became of your new masters?"

"One of them changed his gold into a bank-bill, and sent it home to his poor old mother; then he started off to sea again, and the last time I heard of him, he was chief mate of a fine ship. The other set up in business in Melbourne. Then I bought a horse and cart, and went jobbing about, till I saved money enough to buy this turn-out. But times are not so good now as they were awhile back, and there are too many cabmen on the stand. However, I have not done so badly, Sir: I have bought and paid for a small allotment of land in North Melbourne, and I am putting up a house on it by degrees, though at present I am living in a tent."

"Are you married?"

"Yes, Sir, I married a year ago; and made a good bargain, too. My wife is a real good one to work, and she is as sober and saving as I am myself. She came out in an emigrant ship, about the same time that I did, and went into service directly; and what do you think, Sir? she had saved thirty pounds when

I married her, though she wasn't worth a dollar when she first landed ! That shows what she is made of, Sir ! ”

“ You have been a fortunate fellow, indeed,” said Christopher.

“ Yes, Sir, pretty well ; but, bless your heart, any man who is steady and sober, must get on and save money in this country : there is nothing to hinder him, if he has his health and is willing to work ; but lots of fellows come out here, who are too lazy to work, and others don't know how to work, and ought not to have left their mothers. Then the extravagance I have seen, since I have been here, is awful ; and you would not believe half the stories I could tell you. Why, I have seen lots of dirty shirts, socks, trousers, and jumpers, not half worn out, enough to load my cart ever so many times, lying in the waste land beside the Yarra, just the other side of the bridge. Diggers would come to Melbourne with lots of dust, and throw their dirty swags away, because they could buy new clothes almost as cheap as they could get the dirty ones washed. But even that's nothing to the way they used to throw away their money, in cutting such capers as nobody ever heard of on the other side of the world.”

“ What building is that ? ” interrupted Christopher, as they passed a large structure in course of erection.

“ That's the public library, Sir ; and a fine building it will be when it is finished. It is to be free for all classes ; and I hope it will keep some of the young fellows (whom you may see knocking about the streets at night) from the public-houses and the singing-shops. There are lots of those ‘ free and easies ’ and fiddling saloons in Melbourne, and, considering the mischief they do, it's a wonder the law allows them to keep open. They are worse than man-traps, or any other traps I know of ; and many likely-looking young women have been totally wrecked in those places. I will just tell you of two cases, out of many that I have seen with my own eyes, let alone what I have heard and read of :—

“ Two young girls—sisters—came out in the same ship as my wife did ; they had got two brothers in the colony somewhere. One of the girls was about nineteen, and the other about seventeen years old, and real handsome girls they were as ever you saw. Such eyes they'd got ! enough to strike a fellow blind, if he looked straight at them ; and fine tall dashing figures they had, 't'hat a duke's wife might have been proud of. Well, Sir, they couldn't find their brothers ; and no won-

der neither ; for all the direction they'd got was, 'John and Thomas Smith, at the Jolly Brewers, Melbourne.' While they were looking for them, they got coaxed into one of those singing-shops, and their pretty plumage was soon ruffled, like robin-redbreasts besmeared with bird-lime. Their old father at home soon heard the bad news, it appears, for he came out to look after them about fifteen months afterward, and one of them jumped into the Yarra, *with her baby in her arms*, on the very day he arrived ; so he did not see her until he saw her lying dead on the river-bank, with her infant at her bosom, all covered with slime and weeds.

"The poor old chap came and stopped at my place, for my wife pitied him, and tried to make him comfortable ; but there was no such thing as pacifying him, for he was uncommonly fond of his girls. I thought he would have cracked his heart all to pieces, the way he took on. He used to go wandering about the streets, sometimes the whole night long, looking for the other girl, and crying like a boy, as he went along. I declare it was almost enough to make anybody cry to look at him.

"One night he saw his daughter going into the play with an ugly hulking fellow from Ballarat, so he rushed up, flung his arms round her neck, and howled with joy and misery mixed together like ; when, what do you think, Sir ? the great brute of a digger turned round, and knocked the feeble old man down, broke his arm, and kicked in four of his ribs. He was carried to the hospital insensible, and there he lay, for three or four months ; but before he came out again, the girl had died in the Female Refuge at Prahran."

"Dear me ! that's a very touching story," said Christopher, with a sigh, "and what became of the old man after that ?"

"I don't exactly know, Sir. He stayed with me for a few weeks, after he came out of the hospital ; but I couldn't get any sleep for him. He used to walk about the house all night long, crying, 'O my poor girls ! My poor dear girls !' and used to tear his hair, and take on in such a way, that I was scared at him sometimes. When I went to live at North Melbourne, I hadn't room for him in the tent, so I lost sight of him altogether. I rather think he is in Yarra Bend lunatic asylum ; but I mean to find out for certain the first time I drive that way. If he is there, he is snug enough, for it is a very pleasant place, and the patients get good usage ; and, after all, perhaps it is better for him to be mad than to be sensible, and fret himself to death. I never saw a man take anything to

heart as he did the ruin of his girls. He used to curse himself for hours together for his folly in letting them leave home and come all the way over here with nobody to look after them; then he would curse the villains who seduced the poor things and afterwards deserted them; until it was awful to listen to him, and I have often thought to myself, if only a fortieth part of that broken-hearted old man's curses were to fall on the heads of the rascals who ruined his fine young daughters, I would forty times sooner be in my old horse's shoes than be one of them with all their money. I know the men, Sir, though I never told the poor old chap, lest he should do something rash. But I tell you, Sir," added the cabman, while he thrashed his horse vehemently by way of emphasizing his wind-up, "I say it again, Sir, though I am only a poor man, and those men that I allude to hold up their heads mighty high in the world, I wouldn't change places with them if they would give me my cab full of nuggets into the bargain. For, as my wife said to me only the night before last, 'If those men don't pretty soon begin to mend their manners, and leave off their filthy tricks of hunting down all the poor innocent unprotected girls they set their eyes on, the devil will give them an awful roasting by and by, and serve them right too.' Just you go and look in at the female refuge at Prahran, if you want to see some of their finished work, Sir; and have an hour's talk with the good old gentleman and his wife who have charge of the girls there; and if it doesn't make you cry like a baby, your heart must be as tough as my horse's collar. Beg pardon for speaking out so plainly, Sir, but I'm regularly savage when I think of the many poor girls that I have seen blasted for ever; for I have got two young sisters at home, Sir. I'm afraid it's wicked of me, though my wife says it isn't, but I do often wish I had an arm as strong as a lion's leg, and a whip made of snakes, that I could lash a lot of raping rascals out of this city, who are a disgrace and a curse to it."

CHAPTER XV.

DISASTROUS Termination of Christopher's Ride through Melbourne with the loquacious Cabman. His Meeting with three of the "Calabash's" Passengers. Buys a musical Clock.

CHRISTOPHER and the cabman drove along for some time in silence, each one seeming absorbed in the contemplation of the sorrowful subjects last alluded to. Presently the driver drew up at the door of a saddler's shop, and called to a man inside to inspect some part of the harness, which he at once said was unsafe, and wanted mending.

"I thought it was getting rather shikery; but I must make it do to-day, I'll send it to-morrow, and you had better give it a good overhauling," said the cabman: then, as he started his horse again, he briefly apologized to Christopher for the delay, and explained to him that the young saddler had come out in the same ship with him.

"You may take him for a living proof of what a man may do in Melbourne, if he is steady and saving, and has got ordinary gumption," added the cabman with earnestness. "Mr. Buckles had not half a dozen notes (pounds) when he landed here three years ago; but now he rents that fine shop, and I'll be bound most of his stock is his own, for he is the wrong mark to run in debt very far. He is too fond of peace by day and sound sleep at night to do that."

"He is a fortunate young man," said Christopher.

"He is so, Sir, and a thorough good one, too; 'baal that fellow, gammon,' as the black fellows say. And yet he was a butt for all the rattle-brained jokers on board the 'Shallaballar' the first part of our voyage. There was a superfine lot of customers in the steerage, Sir; as risty tisty as corn-fed cart horses with no work to do. There is no mischievous trick in the world that those fellows would have been ashamed to do. Blamed if I don't believe they would have teased their god-fathers and godmothers out of their wits, and thought nothing

at all of it. But what can you expect, Sir, when a lot of young Rooshuns get cooped up together for three months or so, with nothing to do but draw full rations and gamble for grog? Some of the big ships that come out here, Sir, have got regular bars on board, where any one can go and call for a 'nobbler.' It is not for the like of me to speak, Sir; but I will say this, if owners knew half as much as I do, they would pretty soon do away with that system on board their ships.

"Well, Sir, because Mr. Buckles would not join those chaps in their rollicking games by day, and their drinking bouts by night, they tried to torment him in various ways, and nicknamed him 'Job Groans.' But several of those very jokers were glad enough to have Job Groans to sit by their berths and read to them after they had brought themselves close up to death's door with their Tom and Jerry tricks, and they thought 'Old Harry' was going to tear their brains out. Fair or foul weather seemed to make no difference in Mr. Buckles; he always looked as happy as a bishop. He was no groaner, not a bit of it, Sir; 'Smiler' would have been a better name for him, though it is a pet name with bullock-drivers for their off leaders.

"I remember one awful storm we had, Sir, when the three topmasts went over the side, and two of the crew were struck with lightning. There was a regular panic among the passengers below, for the hatches were fastened down for three hours, and every one of us thought the ship was going to the bottom of the sea. In the midst of the hubbub and yelling, Mr. Buckles stood up as calm as I am now, Sir, and said he, 'Friends, death may be very near to us; let us all pray to God to save our souls.' I declare, Sir, if almost every one in the steerage didn't go down on their knees directly, and I never heard any one pray as Mr. Buckles did; and so many of the passengers said afterwards. I have not forgotten it, and I hope I never shall forget it. After the storm was over, and the hatches were lifted, some of the rowdy boys began their old capers, but they never again made game of Mr. Buckles; in fact, everybody on board respected him towards the end of the voyage, for they could see there was no sham about him, and that's what I liked in him, Sir. Nobody ever saw him standing on his head, as it were, and making a fool of himself one minute, and down on his knees roaring the next minute. Nobody ever saw him grinning his teeth out at mischief and nonsense, or singing rowdy songs, and by and by heard him chaunting prayers

through his nose, with his face as long as my horse's tail; not a bit of it, Sir. He was consistent in his profession, and his conduct had more influence on me than ever so much talk would have had from persons whose deeds belied their words every hour in the day. Those weather-cock yarners almost capsize my wife sometimes, and I have a hard job to keep her straight. 'Becky,' says I to her one day, 'there's a terrible lot of sham among people who pretend to be mighty good, and among some who are paid for setting a good example, too; but there are lots of good people in the world for all that,' says I, 'look at Mr. Buckles, and look at——.' "

The conversation was growing rather too serious to please Christopher, so by way of changing it, he asked the cabman the age and value of his horse.

The man answered the questions with apparent candour, remarking, at the same time, that he did not want to sell the beast, which was the best cab-horse on Swanston Street stand; but that if Christopher wanted a hack horse he knew where there was one to suit him to a T.

Christopher replied that he did not want to buy a horse at present; then, by a series of questions, he gleaned a good deal of information about the prices of horses and fodder, as well as upon subjects in general, which he carefully jotted in his note-book.

They continued to jog up and down and across the fine wide streets of Melbourne, and Christopher seemed at times lost in amazement at the grandeur of many of the buildings, both public and private, and at the general air of activity and progress everywhere evident. The cabman then proposed that he should take a peep at Collingwood, which Christopher assented to; and as they rode along he made divers sapient observations in his note-book, which I need not transcribe, as some of them have long since become public property.

While slowly trotting past the hospital in Lonsdale Street, the horse, which had previously shown a disagreeable proneness to trip, tumbled on his knees, whereupon the driver administered some sharp lashes with the whip, as he said, to wake the sleepy-headed brute. The horse not only awoke, but became restive under the lash, when Christopher remarked, with the air of a connoisseur in horseflesh, "that there was more mettle in the beast than he had supposed from his drowsy action heretofore."

"Bless your heart, he's all there, Sir! It's only the hot wind

and his shabby harness that makes him look like a knacker's hack. His sire was 'Old Blazes;' did you know that horse, Sir?"

"No, I did not," said Christopher, nervously; "hem—I think you had better not hit him again, Mr. Cabman; I'm afraid he will kick the bottom of the cart out. Halloo! look there! I declare he has broken his harness."

"Woa, woa, woa! Catch hold a minute, Sir, while I fasten up the breeching," said the driver, thrusting the whip and reins into the trembling hands of Christopher. In hastily jumping from the car, the driver's hat was blown off by a sudden blast of hot wind; and while he ran to pick it up, his horse ran away in the opposite direction.

Vainly did Christopher tug at the reins, and shout "Waa" and "Woa" alternately. The poor horse, terrified at the broken harness, which was dangling about his hind legs, took no notice of either voice or rein; but rushed along the street at a mad gallop into La Trobe Street, thence into Spencer Street, closely shaving the iron posts at the street corners, and bounding over the formidable gutters like an india-rubber ball.

The trepidation of Christopher was intense; but his frantic appeals to the public, though extremely touching, were unproductive of material aid. There are comparatively few men, even in a large community, who have coolness and courage enough to seize a runaway horse by the head; and there was not one such person in the way that morning. Many pedestrians shouted out, "Woa," and a policeman danced a "corroboree" in the roadway with his arms working like a wooden scaramouch; but if those efforts had any effect at all, it was to make the horse run a little faster.

Onward sped young Blazes round the corner into Collins Street, and continued his course through that crowded thoroughfare—fortunately without collision with other vehicles; his unlucky passenger still tugging at the reins and shouting for help, with his face the picture of despair, done in whitewash. Onward sped the horse and cab, until the axletree broke while crossing the gutter at the junction of Swanston Street, (which looks as if it were specially contrived for stopping runaway horses,) when down came the vehicle and the horse too, and out flew our hero upon the horse's head.

A crowd speedily gathered round, of course; and Christopher was carried into a chemist's shop close at hand, amid general condolence and inquiries as to the extent of his damage; on

which subject various reports were current. In a short time, however, it was ascertained that his neck was not broken; in fact, he was not hurt at all, but had only been frightened into a swoon. Soon after swallowing a composing draught, which the chemist had prepared for him, he was enabled to leave the shop; when to his great comfort he saw amidst the crowd outside the door three of the "Calabash's" passengers. They loudly congratulated him on his lucky escape from being smashed on the first day of his landing, then invited him to dine with them at an hotel in Collins Street.

On his way thither he met the cabman running, hatless, and almost breathless. The poor fellow seemed really glad that his late fare had escaped unhurt, but was very sorry for the downfall of his horse and car. He generously exonerated his horse from blame, and said the mishap had been caused by bad harness; and added, "Take my word for it, Sir, that rotten harness is the cause of similar disasters in nine cases out of ten." Christopher paid the man his fare, with a trifle extra, then rejoined his friends.

An hour afterwards he was seated at a small table in the dining saloon of the hotel, in company with the dandified swearer, before alluded to, and Mr. Forceps, a land surveyor, and a young gentleman named Bibbs, (who was of no profession or calling,) the son of a country rector in England. Mr. Bibbs had a few hundred pounds with him, which his kind father had given him to begin the world with, and which he had begun in earnest to spend. Christopher's exciting ride had given him an appetite, and he was pleased when he saw the waiter bringing in the dishes.

"Waiter, bring in four tankards of 'shandygaff,'" said Forceps; then with a knowing look he asked Christopher, "If he had tasted that exquisite tippie; the latest Yankee notion imported?"

Christopher replied that he had not tasted anything in Melbourne except "hot wind and dust and a glass of physic:" whereupon it was unanimously resolved that he was in honour bound to pay his footing, especially as he had just escaped breaking his legs. He made no demur to the proposition, and when the waiter reappeared with four foaming tankards of ale and ginger beer mixed, Christopher paid for them—as he remarked—like a "bath brick." After taking a hearty draught of the compound his courage revived, and he swaggeringly expressed his regret "that he had not kicked the cab-horse as it lay in the gutter."

Dinner was soon afterwards served up, and they all partook of it; meanwhile the excited triumvirate related their experience of the last night, which made Christopher feel abashed, notwithstanding the emboldening influence of the "shandy-gaff." After dinner they adjourned to the billiard-room to play for a bottle of wine; and when that was lost and won and drunk, they sallied out in merry mood, and paraded arm in arm through the crowded streets, staring at every modest female they met, as unmannerly fellows usually do.

Such of my readers as knew Melbourne in those days will remember that in some parts—in Elizabeth Street especially—there are many small auction shops, where sales of miscellaneous goods were effected throughout the day and evening too. Opposite to one of those shops the four elevated gentlemen stopped to gaze at a keen-eyed man who was flourishing a little ivory hammer about his head, and keeping it poised ready to knock down the first *bonâ fide* customer who opened his mouth. He was just then selling, or trying to sell, a musical clock, the virtues of which he had been loudly extolling to a lot of joking loungers, when Christopher, in a fit of rollicking humour, for which the shandy-gaff was responsible, shouted out "Half-a-crown;" then winking to Forceps, he muttered, "Let us roast the old turkey cock in London style, and astonish the savages."

"Thank you, Sir!" said the auctioneer, who had previously run the article up to six pounds ten shillings. "Six pounds twelve and six; six twelve six; six twelve six; going at six twelve six; any advance? Going! going!—the third and last time, no advance?—Gone! Here you are, Sir; handle it carefully, and it will tell your grandchildren the time of day. Tom, take the money from that gentleman at the door."

"I don't want your clock," cried Christopher, looking stupidly confused. "I only bid half-a-crown for it in fun. I'll give you the half-crown."

A loud shout of derisive laughter burst from the amused company within, as the auctioneer's man handed out the bulky time-piece, and demanded payment for it. In vain Christopher disclaimed his intention to purchase, and protested against the bargain; the salesman was firm, and his man was inclined to be insolent. The loungers were unanimous in declaring it to be a *bonâ fide* sale, while young Bibbs boisterously vowed that it was a "regular sell." Mr. Forceps, after bestowing a variety of uncomplimentary epithets on Christopher for making an ass of himself, and bringing them all into ridicule, advised him to

pay for the "precious ticker" at once, to prevent a quarrel, which he clearly foresaw would have resulted from any further resistance to the demands of the auctioneer and his impudent man Tom. Christopher thereupon paid the money, and telling the salesman to keep the article till he called for it, he left the place as much discomposed as an over-dressed dandy who had just slipped down in a muddy roadway, or a fashionable belle who had lost her bonnet in a "southerly burster."

CHAPTER XVI.

CONTAINS a further Account of Christopher's first Visit to Melbourne, his Incarceration in the Watchhouse, and other Incidents. Departure of the "Calabash" for Sydney.

AFTER the party of aspiring witlings had taken a long stroll through the city, and noisily commented as they went along upon many of the novelties therein, in the ardent hope of drawing public attention to themselves as the latest novelties imported, Christopher proposed to return for his clock, and to proceed on board the "Calabash" before dark. His proposal was loudly objected to by his companions, who declared that he should stay with them and make a night of it. To that he demurred with more than usual firmness, but, as a compromise, he agreed to accompany them to their hotel and crack a bottle of wine, and drink success to their future operations, before he finally parted from them.

Without detailing the schemes of those very "fast" young men to induce Christopher to remain, I record the fact, that after the bottle of wine was drunk, he was less firm in his refusal; and eventually he agreed to accompany them to the play, to see their fellow-passengers, the celebrated Macduff and his dramatic corps, make their *début* before a Melbourne audience.

The excited quaternion soon sallied out towards the Theatre Royal, and as they approached the box entrance, they heard the flippant tongue of their quondam friend Waggle delighting a little knot of fashionably dressed listeners, and a few minutes afterwards Christopher was introduced to several theatrical gentlemen, who all politely expressed their pleasure in welcoming him to Melbourne; at which marks of friendship he was not a little flattered, and handed his card to each of his new acquaintances with all the bubbling pride of first possession of a card case; and his heart grew as big as a lion's for a minute or two, when that talented Thespian corps laughed boisterously at a funny little squib which he had learnt from Launcelot Whiffin,

but had never before had an opportunity of firing off before an appreciating audience.

There was what in professional parlance is called an "overflowing house" that night, consequently it was very close, and there was a perceptible odour from diggers' boots and stale pipes in the pit. When the performance was about half over, Forceps declared that he would rather be sitting on the "Calabash's" boilers, than be nearly wedged to death in their box, and proposed to adjourn to the nearest hotel, and play a game at billiards for an oyster supper. The proposal was at once agreed to; so out bustled the party, making no small noise in their exeunt, and in an hour afterwards they were in a gaudily furnished saloon, supping off mud oysters and London stout, which they had previously played for, and which young Bibbs had paid for. After supper, their spirits having reached larking pitch, they commenced a series of practical jokes, such as filling the water-jugs and the waiters' pockets with oyster shells, drawing fancy sketches in mustard on the tablecloth, removing the chimney ornaments to the supper table and reversing the statuettes in the corners of the room, or pelting each other with French rolls, and sundry other capers of the kind, which they proudly imagined were quite new in the colony, until their fun ended in a fight, as practical jokes usually do. Christopher had crammed a large loaf into Forceps' hat, a piece of wit which that gentleman evidently did not approve of, for he became incensed, and kicked Christopher's new beaver into the fire-place, causing a compound fracture of the crown; whereupon Christopher kicked the skin off Forceps' shins, and a brawl began, which did not seem likely to end without bloodshed and bruises. After boxing each other for a few minutes, young Bibbs proposed that the belligerents should strip and go at it, "*à la* Deaf Burke." Off went their coats and vests instanter, when Christopher's luggage label was exposed to view, and provoked such roars of laughter at his expense that he got madly wroth, seized a chair, and began to batter the whole party, when the landlord appeared, with a strong staff of waiters, and summarily ejected his troublesome customers.

Christopher's after recollections of their further proceedings were sadly befogged, but he had a sort of dreamy idea of having visited another refreshment shop of a lower caste, and of afterwards walking through the streets with a showily dressed female, who claimed him for her cousin, and called him Johnny Cumulately. He had grim reminiscences, too, of falling out with a

pieman, of fighting with policemen, and of being followed to the station-house by a street rabble, who were noisily shouting his name, in connexion with a vulgar song, called "Hot Cockles."

The next morning he opened his eyes to find himself in a dusky, foul-smelling apartment, surrounded by an unrecognisable horde of dilapidated bacchanalians. His tongue was furred, and dry as baked tripe; his head was aching intensely; his body was as sore as though he had passed through a threshing machine, and his mind was in an indescribable state of muddle. At about ten o'clock he was taken into the police court with his three companions, to answer a charge of being drunk and disorderly in the public streets, and with assaulting the police. He had adopted the pseudonym of Peter Brown, and when called upon to answer the charge, he pleaded "Not guilty," in a tremulous voice, which belied his plea: so the case was investigated, much to the amusement of a crowd of dirty-faced loungers, who usually consider a police court as good as a play, if not better.

I will not disgust my readers with a report of the case, but they may form a faint idea of Christopher's sheepish perturbation when questioned as to the ownership of a battered beaver hat with a luggage label affixed to the front of it, and which hat was proved to have been on his head when he was first noticed by the police, creating a disturbance in Collins Street. He was found guilty, and fined five pounds, which he paid at once, then hurried out of the court as fast as his tottering legs could carry him, abashed at the jeers and grins of the bystanders, indignant with Forceps for fastening that odious label to his hat, and fidgetty beyond measure lest a report of his folly should appear in the newspapers, and reach the eyes of his friends at home.

A short time afterwards he was seated in a railway carriage, on his way to Sandridge, with his musical clock tied up in a silk handkerchief on the seat beside him. The last coin in his pocket was paid to the waterman who rowed him on board the "Calabash," and thus terminated Christopher Cockle's first visit to Melbourne.

He went straightway to his cabin, threw himself into his berth, and allowed some of his overload of mental wretchedness to vent itself in muffled yells. In a few minutes Tim Rafferty entered the cabin with his mouth shut, and his eyes wide open. He spoke not a word; but his peculiar shrugs and grimaces eloquently expressed his sentiments. At length Christopher feebly enunciated, "Rafferty, I am knocked up."

“Troth, ye look as iv ye’d bin knocked down, Sir, and sorry enough I am to see it, sohi. Och hone! afther all the sound sinse I spake til yez the night afore, to think that ye shud jist go and git yerself inta this mess. It capsizes my confidence in human natur intirely, dashed if it don’t! An what’s this consarn on the deck, Sir, anythin as ull bite?”

“It’s a clock, that I bought in Melbourne,” said Christopher sharply.

“Och, Mike! a clock! So it is, shure enough, an a rum-lookin ould thing it is, too,” muttered Tim, as he untied the handkerchief. “Mighty handy it will be to carry about wid yez whin ye’re travellin in the bush, to tell yez the time o’ day. Musha! an what nixt ull yez be after buyin, I’d like to know? as Andy O’Fuddle’s mother sed til him whin he fooled his money away at Bannow fair for a gingerbread queen in a cocked hat. A clock, eh! ha, ha, ha! I’m thinkin ye’d betther buy a church bell to carry wid it, Sir.”

“Rafferty, I will not put up with your impudence any longer. Put the clock down, and leave the cabin this instant,” said Christopher, wrathfully.

Tim obeyed in sullen silence; but went directly to his pantry, swallowed a glass of rum, then sat down on a box, and grumbled out his sentiments, some of which were intended to reach Christopher’s ears. “Well, well, I’m ravin mad, that’s a fact; an if ould Daddy Cockle was along side ov me jist this minute, I’m sartin I shud punch his head for sindin that young goosegog away from home wid oceans ov money in his pocket, an not half as much sinse in his head as a deaf monkey. Shure enough I thought, afther all the gumption I tried to cram intil him tother night, he wud have bin safe enow for a week or two; but here he is agin, lookin as puky as iv he’d bin gulped out ov a whale’s belly, an had crawled intil a baker’s oven to dhry himself. His bran span rig out, an his new shiny hat, are ruined out an out; an I’ll ingage ivery blessed hapenny he carried away in his pocket has bin chated out ov him, barrin what he paid for his clock. Och, blathers! I’m crass enough to kick me granny, so I am: an no wondher naythir to see sich a power ov money scattered to ould Nick in that Tom-an-Jerry style, whin I know what a hape ov good might be done wid it. I’ll wager me life now, that pumpkin-headed guffy has spint more good golden guineas sinse he left home than ud rig out an pay the passages ov a dozen smart Irish bhoys as wud do some good in the land; an be the same token it isn’t much good some ov thim are doin

in their own land, more's the pity. There's me cousin Paddy M'Muff, wid his wife an six thumpin big bhoys an girls, over in Galway, workin thimselves half blind jist to git enough to ate, an a few dacent bits ov duds to pit on their backs. Bedad, iv they'd ony got hold ov the money that Goth has spint in murtherin himself, they'd be out here in no time. But, ugh! it's no good blatherin at this rate, not a bit in life, thof I mane to say that money isn't sarved out fair an equal, or I'd have a bit more ov it to my whack, an thin nobody ud catch me comin to say to be shuffled about and trod upon like a pair ov ould slippers. Och! I'm savage as a wild pig, so I am, an iv any saucy spalpeen rins up agin me to-day he'd betther look out for his bones, that's all about it."

The following day the "Calabash" sailed for Sydney. Several ministers and other gentlemen took their berths, and the passage was smooth and pleasant. When passing the islands in Bass's Straits, Christopher crawled upon deck, and seated himself on the bridge, looking pale, haggard, and very nervous.

There was a gentleman on board named Toddle, whom I have not previously introduced to the reader. He was an old colonist, who had landed in Sydney when a mere youth; his sole capital being moderate ability and a disposition to work. He had been diligent in business, and the result was success. In less than twenty years he had acquired more than twenty thousand pounds, and was then returning to the colony after paying a short visit to his friends in his native land.

As Mr. Toddle was a pretty close observer of men and things, he could not fail to notice some of Christopher's infirmities of character, and had often tried to engage the serious attention of the youth, but had found it very difficult to do so when amidst the giddy throng before alluded to. Mr. Toddle knew from experience the value of a little kind counsel, and he always felt a strong desire to offer a word or two of caution or encouragement to young persons just starting out in life; but, while he regarded it as a duty to do so, he felt the delicacy of the task, and the necessity for exercising much tact and judgment in performing it, lest the well-meant advice should do harm instead of good.

On one occasion Mr. Toddle, in his boyhood, was stopped by a good but rather a gruff old gentleman, (with whom he had but a mere bowing acquaintance,) who asked him in a peremptory tone, where he was going. "I am going to see my friend, Mr. R.,

Sir," was the reply. "Don't you know it is Sunday?" "Yes, Sir." "Then why don't you go to church? I don't approve of boys rambling about Sydney streets on Sundays. Come with me to church." "I am merely rambling along the street to my friend's house, Sir; and I would rather not go with you, for Mr. R. is expecting me." "I tell you, you are posting along the road to ruin, Sir," said the old gentleman, shaking his finger at the youth, who stiffly bowed and went on his way as much ruffled and annoyed as his well-meaning but indiscreet admonisher. Mr. Toddle never forgot that little incident; and when talking with young persons, he specially avoided giving advice in a dogmatic style.

Seeing Christopher seated alone on the bridge that morning, and noticing his decrepitude, Mr. Toddle was soon beside him, and was delighted to find the youth rather more disposed for conversation than he had ever been before. Mr. Toddle checked his desire to offer advice, though he knew it was much needed; but, whenever Christopher asked him a question on matters relating to the colony, he carefully introduced into the answer a few words, parenthetically, which would induce another question, and thus he was able to impart a good deal of practical information without appearing obtrusive.

"Do you think I shall have any difficulty in getting respectable private lodgings in Sydney?" asked Christopher, after Mr. Toddle and he had been for some time conversing together.

"Not the least, Sir," said Mr. Toddle. "There are many respectable private boarding establishments in Sydney. I can give you the names of some, if you wish. And there are also many genteel private families who would gladly accommodate you, if you were anxious for homely quietude; but from personal recollections of getting into the reverse of quiet quarters, I would recommend you to consult your friends in Sydney before you select lodgings. Possibly some of the families to whom you say you have letters of introduction may offer you a home, until you join your relatives in the interior."

"Did you ever get into noisy lodgings in Sydney, Sir?" asked Christopher, with a look of interest.

"I did indeed, Sir; and it is well that my reputation was not seriously injured in consequence. But I will tell you the story, as you wish to hear it." Mr. Toddle then began the narrative contained in the next chapter.

CHAPTER XVII.

MR. TODDLE'S Narrative of his Mishaps in the noisy Lodging House in Sydney, and other Matters worthy of a careful Perusal, by young Immigrants especially.

"I WOULD premise my story," said Mr. Toddle, "by reminding you that New South Wales was very different when I first saw it to what it is now; for its moral, social, and political constitutions have undergone wonderful changes since that time. Now you may enjoy all the privileges of advanced civilization, while home comforts and refinement are to be met with in many parts of the bush, as well as in the city. The tone of society is much improved, and the unhappy histories of the past are forgotten, or are seldom referred to. I do not mean to infer that home comforts and refinement were not to be met with in earlier days; but they were far more rare than at the present time.

"I was two or three years younger than you are now, Mr. Cockle, when I first set foot upon Australian soil; and from circumstances which I refrain from detailing, (as they might cause pain to persons who have long since regretted their unkindness,) I found myself alone and friendless in a strange land. I had begun the study of law in England, so soon after my arrival I entered into an engagement with a legal firm in Sydney at a tolerably good salary, considering that I was a mere tyro in the profession. My first concern, then, was to obtain comfortable lodgings; so I sallied out one day for the purpose of finding a quiet home, such as I had left a few months before. Of course, I ought to have asked my employer, or some other respectable resident, to recommend me to lodgings; but what did I then know of the ways of the world? I was not quite seventeen years old, and had never been from home before in my life.

"As I was wandering up one street and down another, looking for cards inscribed, 'Lodgings to let,' or 'Apartments for single gentlemen,' I met with a smartly dressed young man, whom I had casually seen in the company of a youth engaged in the same office that I was in. Although I had never spoken to the

young man, he stopped and accosted me in a familiar manner ; so I asked him if he could tell me where to find respectable lodgings at a moderate rate.

“ ‘ I know just the place for you,’ said he, without a moment’s hesitation. ‘ Old Mrs. Black, in ——— Street, has the snuggest quarters in Sydney, and very cheap, too. She will fatten you up on curried oysters, and all sorts of nice things, and look after your buttons like a mother. I lodge with the old lady myself when I am out of a berth. Come along with me, and I’ll introduce you.’

“ Away I went with him, thinking all the while of my dear old mother far away, and hoping that Mrs. Black might resemble her, if only in a slight degree. In a few minutes we stopped at a house in ——— Street ; and as I hastily glanced at the exterior, I noticed that the window-blinds did not look very tidy. I rather wondered, too, at seeing a glazed card inscribed, ‘ Oyster suppers,’ in one of the parlour windows. However, I thought I must not expect everything so prim and proper in an antipodean lodging-house as in the old house at home.

“ A motherly-looking woman, with a very smirking face, showed me into a tolerably well furnished room up-stairs, with French windows opening upon a long balcony, which I thought would be a very nice place for an evening promenade. A small, but comfortably furnished, bedroom adjoined the long room ; and I was offered the use of those two rooms with board by myself at such a moderate figure, that I gladly closed for them at once ; and at Mrs. Black’s request I paid a month’s rent in advance, for which I omitted to take a receipt. After thanking my *cicerone* for his kindness in recommending me to such very desirable lodgings, I went away, to remove all my personal effects, which were not cumbersome, to my new abode.

“ The next day I was installed into my office. I worked very cheerfully all the morning, and at one o’clock had a refreshing walk to my new home, where a nice hot sheep’s heart awaited me on a side table in the large room aforesaid. At six o’clock I returned home to tea, and after that meal was over I sat down in quietude and comfort, and began to form plans for profitably employing my leisure hours. Indeed, I fancied that all my troubles were past, (I had seen more than usually fall to a boy’s lot,) and that brighter days had really dawned upon me. Thus a week or more passed very peacefully, and I was as happy as I could expect to be among strangers. Old Mrs. Black was very civil and attentive to my wants ; and though I sometimes heard

strange noises in the lower part of the house at night, I was not much disturbed by them, for in those days trifles did not trouble me; and having a sound body and an easy mind, I usually slept well, notwithstanding the heat of the weather and the mosquitoes, which especially like to torment new comers.

"I had noticed several dashing-looking young damsels now and then, as I passed through the hall, who I supposed were Mrs. Black's daughters. One of them I was particularly struck with, though I was too shy even to think of striking in return. She was a saucy-looking little blue-eyed girl, and she used to shoot sly glances at me, and screw her lips up in such a fascinating manner, that I often felt as funny as though I had a live bird inside my breast pocket. But as I had never had an introduction to Mrs. Black's domestic circle, I thought it would be rude to stop and chat with the lasses; so I merely bowed politely to them as I passed in or out of the house. One evening as I was returning home to my tea, the girls were standing at the hall door, as usual, and as I approached I overheard one of them say, 'Here comes Johnny Green,' which was a piece of rudeness such as I had never before experienced from young girls; and I resolved to tell their mother, if they aimed any more ridiculous remarks at me.

"One evening I had retired to rest rather earlier than usual; but was aroused from my first slumber by an extraordinary noise in the large room adjoining. The clatter of knives and forks, jingling of glasses, and the confused mingling of male and female voices, were at length succeeded by a discordant song, the chorus of which was, 'There's a way we have in the navy to drive dull care away;' so I naturally concluded that Mrs. Black had some naval friends, and I muttered to myself, as I rolled over in my hot bed, 'If I were in the navy, I think I should try to change into the army or the civil service, if it be one of the ways of the sea service to make such an uproar as that very often.' And while I was trying to decide which was most objectionable, dull care, or their remedy for it, I was disturbed by some one trying to open my bedroom door: but as I had locked it as usual, I did not feel very uneasy.

"The noise in the long room at length increased to a complete fore-castle frolic. All the company were dancing, or rather galloping, with a clatter almost as if they all wore clogs, or curriers' wooden boots.

"The house trembled; nay, almost tottered; and I had some dread of being found in the morning buried in old bricks and

mortar. By and by my door was tried again, and I heard at the same time some very inelegant epithets addressed to myself in a husky voice, and a female exclaim with a tipsified titter, 'That's Silly Billy's room, you must not go in there.' Soon after that there was a great noise as of shifting furniture and packing up crockery, amid boisterous laughter: then there was a lull in the storm, and I dropped off to sleep.

"Next morning I arose early, as usual, and after completing my toilet operations, I was about to step out of my room to take my customary walk on the balcony before breakfast, when I found that something obstructed the door which opened into the large room. Upon giving it a pretty hard push, it yielded sufficiently for me to squeeze myself out; but simultaneously there was a terrific crash, like the downfall of a crockery shop; and I was petrified at seeing nearly all the furniture lying in a confused shattered heap; while broken plates, dishes, decanters, salt-cellars, pepper-pots, and oyster shells bestrewed the floor.

"It was apparent to me in a moment that some tipsy-brained practical jokers, who had perhaps been annoyed at not having the use of my bedroom, had piled the furniture atilt against the door, in order to give me a little shock before breakfast. In this they succeeded, for they literally made me jump: but I was soon made to jump again to more practical purpose; for while I was standing gazing on the wreck, in silent amazement, Mrs. Black rushed into the room very lightly clad, having just been aroused from her morning slumbers. Her long, grizzled locks were hanging like tangled cobwebs about her livid face; her eyes had a hot cindery glare, while her awful mouth fired out a volley of abuse, which actually scared me more than 'the white squall'—which I had experienced on the equator—had done.

"'I didn't do it, Mrs. Black!' I exclaimed, in a deprecating tone. The infuriated old woman heard me not, or heeded me not; but seized the broken leg of a chair, and aimed a blow at my head, which would have been unpleasant,—to say the least of it,—had I not nimbly avoided it.

"'Hear me speak a word, my dear Mrs. Black,' I began; but I soon found my active young legs were likely to be more useful to me just then than my tongue, for the old woman was excited beyond the reach of argument, at the sight of her shattered household goods; and she continued to aim blow after blow at my head, accompanied with the most appalling curses I had ever heard. I was more than a match for an old woman in agility, and I easily dodged away from the savage thuds of her

club ; but when she began to pelt me with broken plates, I was not so sure of evading her aim, so I beat a retreat down the stairs into the street, where I wandered about for an hour or two trying to collect my bewildered senses, and pondering over the sudden change in my even current of happiness. At nine o'clock I went to my office, breakfasting on my way thither off a polony and a penny loaf.

"I need scarcely tell you, Sir, that Mrs. Black was a woman of infamous character, and her house was a brothel, well known to many dissipated youths of that day, and where many vigorous constitutions have first received the deadly taint of consumption. That evening I hired a porter to carry away my luggage ; but Mrs. Black refused to allow it to be touched until I had paid for sundry oyster suppers which the young man who had introduced me to the house had obtained in my name, and without my cognizance. When I timidly asked for the return of a fortnight's rent, the irate old landlady glared at me like a serpent, and told me to think myself lucky that she had not made me pay for all her broken furniture ; and added many uncomplimentary things, which I need not repeat.

"On looking over my effects, before removing my boxes, I missed many little articles which had been given to me as *souvenirs* by friends whom I dearly prized : but I was afraid to mention my further losses, and indeed I was glad to escape as soon as I could from the coarse jokes and jeers of a number of draggled girls who had gathered round, as they said, 'to see the old woman take the shine out of Johnny Green.'

"That is a brief statement of facts, Mr. Cockle ; and you will clearly see from it the necessity for using great caution in selecting lodgings, and much discrimination in adopting the counsel of persons with whom you have but slight acquaintance, unless they are persons of recognised integrity."

Christopher thanked Mr. Toddle for his kind advice, and said it would tend to make him very circumspect.

Many young emigrants, on first arriving in the colony, entertained the notion that as they were in a strange place, they could shake off the restraints which had been placed upon them on shipboard, and indulge in excesses with impunity ; but they have sorrowfully proved that that was an erroneous impression. "I will mention one instance," added Mr. Toddle, "of an intelligent looking young man who applied to a friend of mine for employment as a draper's assistant, and was curtly told by my friend, that he would not engage him, as he had seen him a few

days before reeling through the streets intoxicated, in company with several other young men who were doubtless his fellow passengers. New arrivals are easily recognised, and the more circumspectly they behave, the better it will be for them in every way, more especially if they are known to possess capital."

"I have often listened with interest to the many little incidents in your long colonial experience, which you have from time to time related at the table, Sir," said Christopher; "and though I have not ventured to converse much with you on the voyage, I hope to profit by the friendly counsel I have both directly and indirectly received from you. I was particularly impressed with a thrilling little tale that I heard you relate one evening in the saloon, though I was seized with such an unpleasant swimming in my head, that I did not hear the latter part of the story. It was about a young officer of a ship falling overboard, while a grand ball was being held in honour of his birthday."

"O! yes, that was poor Wilson, chief officer of the 'Malabar' East Indiaman," said Mr. Toddle. "A most affecting incident indeed. It was told to me by an officer of a ship in which I was once voyaging, who was second mate under Wilson at the time of the sad mishap. I will tell you the story now, if you wish, Mr. Cockle."

"I shall be very glad to hear it, Sir," said Christopher; "for I like stories of that sort, especially true ones."

"Well, Sir, you have perhaps remarked during our voyage that I am fond of walking the deck at night. I have made many sea voyages, and have often indulged my fancy for turning out of bed in the middle watch, and pacing the deck with the officer on duty, especially if he were a pleasant, communicative man. In doing so I have had a double motive, that of pleasing myself and pleasing others too. I recollect an officer saying to me many years ago, 'You cannot think how it cheers me, Mr. Toddle, to see a genial soul come on deck in the middle watch for an hour's gossip. The first watches of the night are usually lively enough; for in fine weather there are always some passengers on deck, and the Captain seldom turns in till eight bells; but the long tedious hours from twelve o'clock till four are very dreary, and the sight of an agreeable passenger then is as welcome as a fair wind or a full moon.'

"I have heard many strange tales of the sea, and of the shore, too, Mr. Cockle, while walking the quarter deck in the middle watches of the night: and I have had some very pleasant meditations occasionally while leaning over the taffrail, watching the

phosphorescent water below, or while gazing at the star-spangled space above me. Bad weather seldom kept me below, if I were even but tolerably well; indeed, I used to think I was more welcome to those on deck then, than on fine bright nights, on the principle, that the face of a friend is more cheering in seasons of distress than in prosperity, and my pleasure was proportionably enhanced. I have voluntarily been lashed to the mizen rigging, under the lee of a tarpaulin, while the ship has been scudding under bare poles before a snow storm, and when the sailors at the wheel have been white as millers. It was a terrifically grand sight to me to watch the seething billows rolling after the ship,—as they do roll in the icy region of Cape Horn,—and quite a pleasing study to observe the steady courage of the steersman, upon whose nerve and watchful skill the safety of the ship depended, when perhaps one false turn of the wheel would have broached the ship to, and swept the decks, or possibly have sent her to the bottom of the sea. It is from frequently noting their cool bravery and energy in times of peril and hardship, that I have acquired a strong attachment to sailors as a class. I feel a hearty sympathy in all that concerns their welfare, and try all I can to incite others to reflect upon the strong claims sailors have upon our consideration; and how largely we are indebted to them for the comforts and luxuries of civilized life. But I am giving you too long a preface to my mournful story, Mr. Cockle: so I will begin it at once."

CHAPTER XVIII.

MR. TODDLE'S Story of the melancholy Death of Mr. Wilson, Chief Mate of the "Malabar" East Indiaman.

"'It was just such a fine bright night as this, when we lost poor Wilson overboard,' remarked a young officer, with whom I was walking the poop of a clipper ship," began Mr. Toddle.

"'Edward Wilson was chief mate of the "Malabar." He was a fine-looking young fellow, and as smart a sailor as ever handled a rope's end or a sextant. He was a general favourite with all on board, from the Captain to the cook; and the passengers, too, were very partial to him, for he always had a smile and a kind word for everybody. I never heard him bully the crew, or give an unnecessary order, merely for the purpose of annoying them; in short, he was a sailor, every inch of him, and a gentleman, too.

"'We were bound for Madras, and had a large number of cadets, and a good many young ladies, with their parents and friends; altogether, it was one of the most agreeable companies that I ever sailed with. On the night of the sad accident, we were commemorating Wilson's birthday; he was twenty-five years old that day, and I may add, that he had just become entitled to a very handsome patrimony in England. A grand supper was preparing in the saloon, and a large awning was spread over the poop, with flags hung around the sides; it was well lighted up with lanterns, and an excellent ball room it made. Several of the crew were good musicians, and, as our poop was spacious, we made up two sets of quadrilles, one on each side of the skylight. All the midshipmen were invited aft, of course, and fine fun they had, too, for there were lots of young ladies; and I need not tell you that middies are generally in good favour with the fair sex, or that those young gentlemen are conscious of the fact.

"'It was a clear moonlight night, with a light south-east trade wind, and the ship was going about four or five knots an hour, under easy sail. At four bells supper was announced, and

the gay dancers, with the rest of the company, descended to the saloon, and took their seats in high spirits, while the cuddy rang with peals of joyous laughter. A fine spread there was on the table, too; and the steward looked as proud as the Lord Mayor's butler, in the consciousness that the company hadn't often sat down to a grander supper than his head had planned for them. The toasts had been all arranged; and I recollect I had been for two days before preparing a little speech, which was twice as puzzling to me as logarithms.

"The guests were all seated, when it was observed that Mr. Wilson's chair was vacant, which called forth a little pleasantry from the Captain, and a general laugh from the company; for Wilson was a very modest young fellow, and some of us thought he was in his cabin, screwing up his courage to pass through the complimentary ordeal which awaited him.

"Go to Mr. Wilson's cabin, steward, and tell him we are all seated;' said the Captain. Then he drily added, 'He is learning his oration, I'll be bound. Wilson is something like myself, he knows more about working a ship than making soft speeches; but I'll guarantee that he will talk sensibly when he stands up, and that is more than I should like to say for many men of far greater oratorical pretensions.'

"In a few minutes the steward returned, and said that Mr. Wilson was not in his cabin.

"Is he playing 'bo-peep' with us?' said the Captain; whereupon some of the guests smiled, and looked under the table, while one of the cadets arose and peeped into his cabin; and a young lady playfully suggested that they should search the steward's linen chest, in the corner, as the truant might be playing the tragical part of the bride of the 'mistletoe bough, in the castle hall.'

"It is very strange,' said the Captain, with a mixture of vexation and concern in his face. 'I never knew Wilson to act so absurdly before. When did he leave the quarter-deck? Can anybody tell that?'

"At those queries, there were anxious glances from one to another all along the table, when the before-mentioned young lady remarked that, after dancing a quadrille with her about nine o'clock, Mr. Wilson had led her to a seat, and a few minutes afterwards she saw him hastily disappear behind a flag, near to the mizen rigging, which circumstance she had forgotten until that moment. Upon consideration, no one could remember seeing him after that time. Of course, there was a general

stir at once. All hands were mustered, and a search was made from one end of the ship to the other, and even up in the tops; but, alas! poor Wilson was not to be found anywhere. The man at the wheel said he fancied he heard cries astern, a little after two bells; but the noise of the music and dancing was so great, that he could not clearly distinguish the cries, and he had thought there were albatrosses or gulls in the ship's wake.

“It is impossible for me to convey to you, Sir, an idea of the consternation and mourning on board, when at length the melancholy truth burst upon us, that the unfortunate young man had indeed fallen overboard, just after he had danced with the belle of the festive party. The ship was hove to at once, and a boat was lowered; but though the excited crew pulled seven miles astern, they saw no sign of the lost one; and when the boat returned there was general wailing throughout the ship, such as I have never heard before or since.

“The way I account for the sad mishap, is this: he was aware that he would be expected to make a speech after supper, and I know that he had prepared one; but perhaps he was afraid that dancing all the evening would drive all his ideas out of his head; so he had quietly slipped away from the dancers, and was getting on to the main deck by the mizen chains, or perhaps he was walking along the taffrail, and in his hurry and excitement had fallen overboard. The jocund voices of his friends, who were assembled to do him honour, smothered his loud cries for help; and he was left alone to grapple with a lingering death, when life seemed so desirable to him, and so full of bright promises. Poor fellow! It is horrible to contemplate the agony he must have suffered, for he was a good swimmer, and would probably have kept afloat an hour or more, unless drawn down by sharks. I have often lain in my berth, Sir, and shuddered, while I have tried to fancy what his feelings were, when he saw the ship slowly sailing away from all possible reach of his voice: to hear the music, and the merry feet of the dancers; to see the bright lights of the ship, and to feel at the same time that he was inevitably lost; going to find a weedy grave in the horrible depths of the ocean: that five minutes before he was the idol of a ship full of warm-hearted friends, dancing in all the buoyancy of youthful strength and spirits, in company with a score of beautiful girls, who could not but admire his handsome face and figure, and an equal number of young men, not one of whom could outvie him in any way; and to find himself suddenly in the midst of the

ocean, hopelessly swimming after the retreating vessel, and, perhaps, surrounded by ravenous sharks. Ugh! it is too horrible to talk about, Sir.

“‘I need scarcely tell you, Mr. Toddle, that we had no grand supper, that night,’ continued the young officer, with emotion. ‘It was mournful to see the stewards silently clearing away the untasted delicacies from the table; and, when that was done, a young minister, who was going out as a missionary to India, delivered a most solemn and appropriate address. His text was, “In the midst of life we are in death.” His voice was often inarticulate, from the depth of his emotion, and the sobbing of the company might have been heard at the bowsprit end; while the rugged faces of the sailors, who had crowded into the saloon, were bathed in tears of genuine sorrow. Poor Wilson! In the prime and pride of manhood, with the sun of prosperity in the zenith, and with all that could make life dear to him within his view, he was whirled down to a cold grave, in some ocean cavern, or mangled and devoured by the horrible monsters of the deep.

“‘Lay aft here, the watch! Take a small pull on the lee main topsail brace! Well, there—well, belay! Fore-topsail brace! Well, there, haul taut the weather braces! Strike four bells!’ shouted the young officer, suddenly turning from me.

“‘I fancied he gave those commands to the crew, in order to divert his feelings, which had become painfully affected by the recital of the melancholy death of his friend. In a few minutes he resumed his walk by my side, and said in a firmer voice, ‘I have not told you the whole of that sorrowful story, Sir; but I dare say you have heard more than enough.’ Upon my expressing a wish to hear it all, he sighed, and continued his narrative as follows:

“‘Having been an intimate friend of Wilson’s from boyhood, and having been well acquainted with his family, I was deputed to write them the melancholy tidings; and a difficult task I found it, too. It was desperately hard work to pen a letter to his aged parents, which I knew would fall like an iceberg on their home, and perhaps hasten their passage to the grave; for Ned was their only son, and the pride of their life. But if that was a heart-wringing job, what was it to write to poor Jenny Graham, Ned’s betrothed, to whom he was to have been married when he returned to England? I am not much given to sentimentalism, Mr. Toddle; very few sailors indulge in that sort of softness, you know; but I wept like a child while writing

those letters, and I think it took me longer to compose them than it would take me to trace a chart of the Pacific Ocean.

“‘I had known poor Jenny from her infancy; and though I thought, as she was a well-trained, sensible girl, she would not yield to extravagant grief, I knew how fondly she loved poor Ned, and that such a sudden blow on a heart like hers would make a terrible impression. I told the sad news in as few words as possible, and did not trouble her with too much impossible advice about rousing up her spirits, or the like; but I told her I would call and see her, if I got safe back to England.

“‘I kept my promise, Sir; and I assure you I have felt less trepidation, when driving on to a lee shore in a dismasted ship, than I felt when approaching widow Graham’s house, in the outskirts of a country village, in England. I opened the garden gate one sunshiny afternoon, and lo and behold, just before me, in a little summer house, covered with roses, sat Jenny, dressed in deep mourning, surrounded by a group of village girls, whom she was teaching to read and sew. I cannot talk much about my interview with Jenny and her mother; but I was surprised to hear how calmly the poor girl spoke, after the first heavy burst of grief was over, and she had stowed away in her breast pocket the packet containing letters, and sundry little valuables, which I had found in Ned’s berth. I learned something that afternoon, Sir, that I knew nothing of before; I learnt that there is a power in true religion to sustain poor mortals under extraordinary trials,—that faith in Christ is the best life-buoy we can have to sustain us, when buffeting with the billows of life. Poor Jenny told me it was that alone which kept her heart from breaking up; and I believe it, too, Sir, for there was not even a shadow of cant about that girl; besides, her actions proved beyond a doubt that there was the real thing itself in Jenny’s heart; and that it was principle, and not mere sentiment, which influenced her. Her grief was deep-seated, but she did not exhibit it much; and, though she was far from being gay, she was not mopish or inert. Her greatest relief, she told me, was in constant useful occupation; so, to furnish that, she undertook the gratuitous education of about a dozen poor young lasses belonging to the adjoining village, and she devoted all she could spare from her small fortune, in relieving the wants of the aged poor and the sick people in her neighbourhood. Thus, by keeping her mind and body well employed, she had less time to fret over her trials; and I dare say she will weather them all in the course of time, Sir.

“ ‘That same night I called on Ned’s father and mother. It was a mournful meeting indeed ! The dear old lady hung about my neck, and sobbed as though her heart was bursting, while the white-headed old gentleman stood with his hands clasped together, and his eyes looking upward, without shedding a tear, or speaking a word. But I find this part of the story always half chokes me, Sir. It is distressing enough to see a woman’s grief, to hear a tottering old mother pour out her broken-hearted sobbings, for the loss of her only son ; but to see an old man’s heart so wrung and tortured, and assuming composure under it, is as awful as the glare of a burning mountain. I would rather not say any more about that harrowing interview, Sir. I was very glad when it ended ; for I could not bear to witness the agony of the afflicted pair. But I shall never forget the intensely earnest look of that dear old man, when I rose to take my leave of them. He followed me to the hall door, and, grasping my right hand, and laying his left hand affectionately on my shoulder, he groaned out just these five words, (the only words I heard him speak,) “*Prepare to meet your God.*”

“ ‘They were more than mere feeble human utterances, I believe ; for they seemed to sink right into my soul at once, and to be impressed indelibly on my memory. They were the first kind warning words I had ever heard, and I fancy I hear their echoes in my ears at this moment. I never go aloft in a stormy night, but those solemn words seem to be borne on every blast ; I can trace them in the vivid lightning which plays about the masts, and hear them in the hissing of the surging waves. Poor Wilson’s untimely fate was a sad blow to me, Sir ; but it was the means of awakening me to a sense of the folly and danger of being unprepared for so awful a change. Carelessness is reckoned among the leading characteristics of a sailor, and it is a wondrous anomaly, too ; for there is no class of men so peculiarly liable to sudden death. Few young men have been more reckless, or more miserably hopeless, than I have been ; but I have experienced a happy change, which I wish all my shipmates could realize. Now, Sir, I carry a sheet anchor in my heart, which assures me of safe mooring in a port where death never enters, and where there are no storm waves. Faith is my compass, and the Bible is my chart, and, though I am often perplexed with the variations and undercurrents of life, I still carry on, blow high or low, conscious that my Pilot (Christ) is not far off, and that I can trust Him at all times. I have no more confidence in myself than in a rotten rope ; but, like the

author of that excellent book, "The Sinner's Friend," I have lashed the cross and the anchor together, and alongside of them I write my watchwords, *Other refuge have I none.*"

"That is a very sad story, Sir," said Christopher, with a sigh. "Poor Wilson! I wonder how long he swam after the ship, and whether the sharks bit him, or the albatrosses pecked his eyes out! What awfully bitter reflections he must have had, poor fellow, as he saw the lights in the cuddy, through the stern windows, and heard the ladies and gentlemen dancing on the poop, and perhaps heard them laughing merrily, as if in mockery of his vain shouts for help! Dear me! it makes me shudder to think of it. But even that is not such a dreadful story as I once heard you tell, Mr. Toddle, about those poor sailors being lost, when a ship's masts were blown away."

"Ah, that was another very melancholy catastrophe, more so, perhaps, because it might have been avoided by the use of only ordinary caution. It was one of those disastrous results of 'carrying on,' as it is technically called, which some Captains and officers of ships take a pride in, and which is admired by a certain few, who cannot discern between foolhardiness and bravery."

"I almost forget the particulars of that mishap: I wish you would tell me about it now, Sir."

"The Captain of the ship I alluded to," said Mr. Toddle, "had made a heavy bet with the Captain of another ship in London, that he would make the quickest passage out to his destination. In attempting to do so he used to crowd sail upon his vessel, until the boldest of his passengers quailed with fear; and some of the timid ones were kept constantly in a state of trepidation. I was told by one of the passengers, that it was scarcely possible to walk the deck, even in a moderate breeze; for the ship, being over-pressed with sail, lay over so much, and the decks were continually wet with spray; but in a strong breeze green seas often broke on board, so that it was positively dangerous to be on deck. It was a common occurrence to hear the loud report of a sail blowing away, the crushing of the lighter spars, or the smashing of bulwarks: indeed, I was told that one of the lady passengers never afterward recovered from the severe shock which her nervous system received on that voyage. That shows the advisability of passengers learning something about the character of the Captain, before engaging their berths in a ship. Bear in mind, Mr. Cockle, I know something about ships, and the way to sail them; and don't think that I am

exaggerating or commenting upon matters of which I am wholly ignorant.

"One night the hands were turned out in the middle watch to shorten sail. The wind had been gradually increasing for several hours, and the ship was plunging fearfully in a heavy cross sea, and heeling over nearly on her beam ends, turning everything moveable in the cabins upside down. The command was given to hand royal and fore topgallant sail, and haul down the flying jib. Four men hurried aloft to perform that perilous duty, when shortly afterwards the three topmasts went over the side, and all the poor fellows were drowned.

"I don't know what the Captain of that ship thought of the mishap in his *sober* moments," added Mr. Toddle; "but I think I should not be able to sleep quietly for dread of the ghosts of those poor slaughtered sailors; and my conscience would often smite me for having through sheer vanity or love of money recklessly sent those unfortunate men into the presence of their Maker, perhaps unprepared for the awful change. It is clear to common sense that sail ought to have been reduced hours before; and had that been done, it is probable the disaster would have been avoided.

"The common dangers of the sea are surely enough for poor sailors to risk, for the very moderate pay they generally get, without wilfully endangering their lives by insanely carrying on, or *overloading* ships, both which evils are common enough in the present day, as I can experimentally testify; and they loudly call to the law-makers for remedy. Some of those unlucky sailors just referred to left wives and families totally unprovided for; and one young fellow left an aged mother, (who had been solely dependent on him for support,) to end her days in the workhouse.

"It is a sad pity that sailors in general are not more thoughtful in providing for those who are dependent upon them," continued Mr. Toddle; "and they could easily do it by means of a Life Assurance policy. Though they might perhaps have to pay rather higher rates than landsmen, for the additional risk of their calling, the rates would still be within compass of every steady sailor who is in good health."

"I don't exactly understand what Life Assurance means, Sir," said Christopher.

"Don't you, Sir? I am surprised at that. I will explain it as well as I can in a few words; but I advise you to study the subject carefully, at your leisure, for it is of vast importance

to the welfare of society in general. I think you told me just now that you are not quite twenty-one years of age; so, assuming that you are in good health, and of temperate habits, you might, by paying a premium of £1. 18s. 5d. annually, insure £100 to be paid to your friends at your death. You could insure for a larger sum at the same rate. Or, if you wished to make a provision for your old age, you might, by paying £7. 2s. 6d. per annum secure £50 a year for life, after you had attained the age of fifty-five years. I have given you the rates of one of our most flourishing colonial institutions; and in that society each member participates in the profits, which are periodically ascertained, and awarded to the policy-holders in the form of bonuses. It would be tedious to explain all the *minutiæ* now, Sir; but you had better study the subject, as I said before, and when you understand it try to enlighten your neighbours, who may be ignorant of the benefits of such institutions.

"I heartily wish that not only seamen, but landsmen too, would avail themselves of the advantages of Life Assurance or Deferred Annuities. We should then see comparatively few poverty-stricken widows and orphans. Then there would be far less need for Benevolent Asylums for the reception of worn-out folks who are unable to work, but who omitted in their younger days to make provision for the winter of life; and there would be fewer calls on the purses of the charitable, to help persons who have neglected to help themselves."

As they were talking, they observed a brig, about three points off their starboard bow, lying with her main-yard hove aback, and her ensign hoisted. Thinking that the vessel was in need of assistance, the officer of the watch called out, "Port, a small bit!" and the "Calabash" was steered direct for the brig. When close under the stranger's stern, the officer of the "Calabash" shouted, "What do you want?"

"Nothing," was the laconic reply of the bluff-looking master of the brig, who was standing on the weather taffrail, smoking his pipe.

"Confound you!" muttered the mate, looking as savagely at the burly Captain of the brig as if he were a pirate; then he shouted to the steersman of the "Calabash," "Keep the ship her course again."

"That is the most contented man I have seen in the course of my travels round the world," remarked Mr. Toddle, laughing; "he wants nothing. I never before met with a man who did not want a little more than he could get of some thing or other."

CHAPTER XIX.

CHRISTOPHER'S Arrival in Sydney. His shocked Feelings at the rude Behaviour of some of his Fellow-Lodgers. His Introduction to Mr. Fitz-Chowse Slyver, also to Mr. Janus Thugman. Opens a Bank Account.

ON the afternoon of the third day after leaving Melbourne the "Calabash" passed between Sydney Heads. The gloom which had of late disfigured Christopher's face partially cleared away as the steamer glided swiftly through the sparkling waters of Port Jackson; and he quite startled his friend Mr. Toddle by a sudden outburst of admiration of the strikingly beautiful landscape around him, in language that was grandiloquent, if not sublime; while his eyes literally swam in tears of pleasure.

Mr. Toddle had often observed the brightening influence of the first sight of Sydney Harbour on the faces of sea-weary emigrants; and he had a vivid recollection of his own glad feelings when first gazing on what is generally admitted to be one of the loveliest harbours in the world. Indeed, the sudden transition from the restless tossing on the ocean, after a long voyage, to a placid land-locked harbour, where the lavish hand of nature in the scenery around has been so tastefully aided by science and art,—is creative of thoughts and emotions which a prosy pen can no more express than an ordinary painter could portray the rare beauties. Many of my readers will sympathize with Christopher's rapturous gushings of soul without further stimulus from me; to others I would heartily say, "Come and see our unrivalled harbour, and be enchanted too."

The rattling of the cable, and the roaring of the liberated steam, presently aroused Christopher from his dreamy contemplation of the romantic scenes around him, and with a smothered sigh he ejaculated, "Heigho! the voyage is ended." So it certainly was; for the best bower anchor was down deep in the mud, and the "Calabash" was riding in Sydney Cove.

"Welcome to the capital of the south," said Mr. Toddle, kindly taking Christopher's hand, while he directed his gaze to the mass of buildings before them. "You may well express

wonder at the extent of that noble city, when but a handful of years ago the site of it was a dense brush, inhabited only by wild men and kangaroos.—May your career in the colony be a prosperous one, Sir!” continued Mr. Toddle. “I wish that heartily; and as we shall part in a few minutes, I will venture to add a word or two of counsel and encouragement, which I am sure you will take kindly. Be careful of your health, your reputation, and your money. Be honest, sober, industrious, and frugal, and you will be an honour to the land. You may see on every hand many cheering proofs of what persevering energy can achieve under singular difficulties. Let them stimulate you to exertion; and bear in mind that whatever honourable pursuit you embark in, if you steadily devote yourself to it, you may reasonably look for success. Here is my card, Mr. Cockle, and I shall be very happy to see you at Frogs’ Flat, if you should ever travel to Nimrod River: any one will direct you to the Birdcage, which is the name of my little temporary retreat. Good bye, Sir!”

Mr. Toddle was about to descend the gangway ladder into a boat which one of his friends had brought alongside for him, when Christopher pulled his coat tail, and whisperingly asked if he could direct him to the best hotel in Sydney, as he thought he would rather not go into private lodgings for a few days.

“It is not easy for me to tell you which is the best hotel where there are so many good ones; but the Royal is decidedly the largest one in Sydney,” said Mr. Toddle hastily; then again shaking hands with the lonely youth, he jumped into the boat, and was rowed to shore.

Of course, there was plenty of noisy bustle on board the “Calabash;” there always is at the end of a voyage; and Christopher began to feel his old gloom return as he saw his fellow voyagers leaving as fast as they could, many of whom were gladly anticipating the affectionate greetings of expecting friends, while he felt that he was going into a land of strangers. After a time he resolved to leave the ship too; though he felt a mournful reluctance, as though he was going from his home again. A choking sensation nearly overcame him while packing a few necessities into a portmanteau; and the shouts of the sailors on deck sounded in his ears like the sorrowing adieux of old friends. Many of my immigrant readers will remember similar soft feelings. Without trusting himself to say good-bye to Captain Toffey, or even to Tim Rafferty, Christopher got into a water-

man's boat, and landed at the Circular Quay, when he hired a cab, and drove to the Royal Hotel.

There were staying at the hotel squatters from the Murrumbidgee, the Gwyder, and the Darling rivers: gentlemen with bushy beards and aristocratic bearing. There were also Hunter River landlords, gentlemen diggers, wealthy storekeepers, captains of ships, and a sprinkling of newly arrived passengers, whose pursuits were undefined. Christopher was surprised when he sat down to the tea table, in the midst of a large party, to find that he attracted so little notice, considering he was such a recent importation from the world's metropolis. But he was rather glad than otherwise, and he resolved to begin at once to pick up experience; to listen attentively to the conversation, (which was ceaseless, and as varied as the pursuits of the talkers,) and to inwardly digest any scraps of wisdom which might be of future service to him; specially resolving to observe his father's sage injunctions, "to keep his mouth shut, and his ears and eyes wide open."

"So that new crack steamer the 'Calabash' is in at last," remarked a bronze-faced captain to a friend who sat opposite to him. "I was afraid she had blown up, or turned a turtle, or got on the stones somewhere. She is a likely-looking craft certainly, but she has only done half as well as she was expected to do; and it's my opinion that the 'Telegraph' could walk round her like a shark round a crippled whale. Why, I've beaten her by ten days with my old hooker, laden as deep as a sand barge."

A lively conversation ensued, and various opinions, complimentary and otherwise, were passed upon the "Calabash," upon her speculative projectors, and her hopeful proprietors. At length there was a lull in the conversation, and the subject was apparently exhausted, when Christopher, forgetful of his late mental promise to be silent, in the temptation of such a favourable opportunity for drawing a little more notice to himself, coughed slightly, and meekly informed the company that he was a passenger by the "Calabash."

"Indeed!" exclaimed two or three voices together; while all eyes were turned towards the youth, who naturally felt a little proud of his sudden popularity.

"How was it you made such a long passage?" asked the bronze-faced Captain.

Christopher ahemmed twice, then began a circumstantial account of the breakage of the paddle wheel; and pathetically

explained his own terrifying impressions while rushing below to his cabin for his cork jacket.

"O, was that all?" said the Captain, abruptly stopping a tedious description of the second breakage; "I thought perhaps you had fallen in with bad weather, or"—

"So we did, Sir," said Christopher solemnly. "We had an awful gale just after we left the Cape the last time, and, my goodness! you should have heard how the moveables in the state rooms tumbled about; for we had had no rough weather to speak of before, and the passengers had forgotten to tie their things up. In the middle of the night I felt frightened; so I went on deck, and there was such a terribly rough sea, I made sure the ship would go to the bottom, and so did many other passengers, especially Mr. Presto. A big wave hit one of the paddle wheels, split a bulwark, and washed two coal scuttles overboard; and just then I overheard the Captain say that he had not met with such a breeze since the"—

"Ha, ha, ha!" laughed the whole company; while some of them, having finished their tea, rose up, and walked away.

Christopher felt uncommonly grieved at the unmannerly mirth which his pathetic story had occasioned; and he with much difficulty restrained his tears. Like many other young voyagers, he had innocently conceived exaggerated impressions of his first hard blow at sea, and felt a little *éclat* at having passed through such a trial. Often had he longed to be back on "Goose Green," to astonish his grandmother and uncle Peter with a vivid description of those mountainous waves and those thundering blasts which had made the big masts shiver and shake like barley straw. Often had he pleasantly pictured his mother and sister shuddering at his thrilling stories of the perils and dangers which he had escaped. Often had he chuckled at the idea of astounding old Rakes and Sally Mander,—who had never seen salt water,—by repeating Quidd the boatswain's hyperbolical assertion, "that in one heavy squall it took half the crew to hold the Captain's hat on." Indeed he had often fancied he would gladly go home again directly, for the mere delight of telling his wondering friends all that he had seen on his voyage out.

It is no wonder, then, that he felt hurt, after telling his story in the most moving manner possible, to see it produce a contemptuous chuckle all round the table, when he had counted upon a solemn silence, if not a shudder of sympathy. Any storyteller in the world would have felt such a keen cut as that.

Poor Christopher was too much knocked down to reason on the subject, or he might have concluded that a tame description of an ordinary gale of wind at sea, though novel enough to thrill through the whole population of an inland village in England, would probably be laughed at by persons who had often crossed the ocean, and who regarded such common occurrences with matter-of-fact indifference.

There was one gentleman present, however, who sympathized with Christopher's discomfiture; for, when tea was over, he whisperingly expressed his disgust at the rudeness of some of the party at table; then kindly asked Christopher if he would step out into the balcony, and smoke a cigar, and at the same time finish the story which had been so barbarously interrupted, and which had strongly aroused his curiosity and his sympathy too.

Christopher felt grateful for that little mark of attention from a stranger, and he politely acknowledged it, while he accepted the proffered cigar. As they walked up and down the long balcony in front of the hotel, puffing and chatting, a mutual good fellowship sprang up with the rapidity of fungus, or mustard and cress.

Mr. Slyver was a showy-looking man about thirty years old, with a glib tongue and an insinuating manner, which so won upon Christopher's soft nature, that he not only told the story of the fractured paddle wheels, but other little stories more immediately connected with his personal concerns. Mr. Slyver listened with most patient interest, until Christopher paused for breath; then, with a frankness which betokened implicit confidence, he gave a running outline of his own history, stopping occasionally opposite to the gas lamp, to observe the effect of his disclosures upon the face of his new acquaintance.

Mr. Slyver was highly connected at home, at least so he told Christopher. By the way, the number of "highly connected" young persons of both sexes, *whom nobody knows*, is marvellously great in Australia; and I have seen some ridiculous exposures of silly deceit of that sort. I once heard of a very forward young man who boasted that his father was a high church dignitary; but it was ascertained by accident, some years afterward, that his honest old sire was merely beadle of a chapel-of-ease in England.

However, Mr. Slyver told Christopher that his relatives were very wealthy, and that he had been on terms of intimacy with several members of aristocratic families, whom he named. He had come out to the colony with the intention of settling into some-

thing or other, but was undecided as to the course he should take until he received an accession to his capital from a rich uncle in Yorkshire. Meanwhile he was amusing himself with a mine in the interior. Besides, he had found such a lamentable lack of refinement, so much selfishness, and an absence of easy, high bred confidence in colonial society, that he was half inclined to go to India, and take an appointment under his cousin, who was deputy governor of Poonah.

"For instance, Sir," said Mr. Slyver warmly, "the unfeeling—nay, the coarse—way in which you were treated at the tea-table this evening, was intensely painful for me to witness. I saw, too, that you felt it keenly, and I was drawn towards you on the instant by a strange sort of sympathy, which I know your refined nature reciprocated at once. There is a sort of mysterious attraction, or cohesion, or—or—whatever you like to call it, existing between kindred natures, which I am not deeply enough versed in psychology to explain, though I know it exists, for I feel it here, Sir," (slapping his breast,) "and I feel sure you have a heart within you which can reciprocate generous emotions. I am very glad, indeed, that I have met with you, Mr. Cockle. Will you allow me the pleasure of shaking hands with you, and again to assure you that I have felt deeply interested in the story which those gentlemen at the table laughed at so rudely?"

Christopher expressed a reciprocity of feeling as well as he knew how, while he exchanged a warm brotherly grip with his high-souled friend; and he felt happier than he had done for some time. They then walked and talked about their personal experiences, and smoked and drank brandy-and-water until it was near midnight, when they separated.

Christopher betook himself to his chamber, which was about the centre of the long corridor on the uppermost floor of the house. After taking off his boots, he sat down, and entered in his note-book sundry ideas which he had picked up in the course of the evening relative to Murrumbidgee sheep runs, and Gwyder cattle runs, and Kangaroo runs, fit for either sheep or cattle, which were to be had for the mere seeking, on the Darling River, and beyond it. He also noted down a specific for scab in sheep; a simple way of taking a wen off a horse's withers without the knife; a rational plan for driving bullocks without swearing at them; and plain directions for travelling in the bush without being lost. Then he noted down some of the remarks of a Captain who traded to New Zealand with cattle, and inferred therefrom that there was money to be made in that trade. He

also booked the opinion of a gentleman digger, that a hit was to be made by buying up the scrip of the "Turon Gold Ridge Mining Company" from the desponding holders. He noted the firm belief of a country storekeeper, that "Cork rose butter" would pay cent. per cent.; and other minor items of miscellaneous knowledge, including a recipe for making hens-lay every day in the year, which an old settler from the Hunter River had discovered, after a life-long study.

The next morning, after breakfast, Christopher took a stroll down George Street as far as the cathedral; but a sudden "brickfielder," or strong southerly squall, which raised clouds of dust, forced him to turn his back to it, and he shortly afterward entered the ——— Bank, looking as grimy as a crossing sweeper. But his letter of credit soon proved that he owned plenty of *dust* of the popular sort; and the manager received him with a suavity which would have filled his heart with confidence and hope, had he been a poor nervous customer with an overdrawn account, calling to ask for a little more accommodation. After a short interview with the complaisant manager, Christopher opened a small current account, and left the Bank with a cheque-book sticking out of his breast-pocket, and a pride inside his breast such as he had never felt before.

Being over anxious to see if he could actually raise money by simply writing "Christopher Cockle" in the lower corner of one of the elegantly engraved forms in his pocket, he entered Mountcastle's shop, and selected a new cork ventilator. With dancing eyes he drew a cheque in payment, which that prince of hatters received with a polite bow, and smiled at it as pleasantly as though it were a new bank note, while he dropped it into his till. Christopher felt elated beyond measure; and, in order to test his credit still further, he put on the new hat and left his old one, without a word of objection from the hearty hatter, which undoubtedly proved his confidence in the virtue of the cheque.

Christopher then walked proudly out of the shop, and straightway into the market, to escape from the dusk; and there he stood before a fruit-stall, and ate ripe peaches, until the saleswoman who stood by, and kept tally, began to fear he would never be able to walk out of the market again.

At one o'clock he returned to the Royal Hotel to luncheon, and sat beside his fascinating friend Mr. Slyver. After that meal they strolled arm in arm round the government domain and through the Botanical Gardens, chatting familiarly as they went.

along, until Christopher was fairly astounded at the extensive knowledge of the world which his companion possessed. In the evening they went together to the theatre; and after the performance supped at a *café*; where Christopher was introduced by Mr. Slyver to a very silvery-tongued gentleman, who gave him a most pressing invitation to his house a little way out of town, and at the same time handed him a business card inscribed :—

MR. JANUS THUGMAN,

Commission Agent,

LOWER PITT STREET.

CHAPTER XX.

CONTAINS an Account of Christopher's Visit to Botany Bay with his new Friend, Mr. Slyver. How he delivered his introductory Letters. How he got very drunk, and, at the same Time, very confidential.

"WOULD you like a ride to Botany Bay this afternoon, Cockle?" asked Mr. Slyver, as they arose from the table, after a very cosy chat over their luncheon, on the following day.

"Hem—I should like it very much indeed, but a—a—I'm afraid I can't ride," stammered Christopher; while recollections of his galling trip to Longwood overshadowed his mind like a disagreeable dream. "I should not like to mount a horse, and suppose there are no tame donkeys for hire in Sydney."

"Well, suppose we go in a gig? Botany is a charming suburb; and, from its having been the first landing-place of Captain Cook and La Perouse, it has many interesting associations. You really must go, Cockle. It is only seven miles."

"I shall be very happy to go, a—a—that is to say, if you can drive the gig, for I feel scarcely competent myself. Our coachman was going to teach me the art of driving; but Ma was exceedingly nervous whenever I attempted to take the reins; for Brownie had a disagreeable habit of bolting, and upsetting the carriage, or of kicking his heels through the splash-board occasionally."

"Bolting is a very objectionable habit, but one very common in Sydney horses, and in their owners too sometimes," remarked Slyver with a smile. "But I flatter myself I am rather an expert whip. I have driven the York mail often, and I once drove young Lord Gullikin's drag home from the Derby, when every one on it was dead drunk except myself and the footman."

Christopher gave a smile of admiration, mingled with awe and pride, at the idea of going to Botany Bay with a man who was on such intimate terms with a lord; and, taking the proffered arm of his friend, they walked to Tim Driscoll's, in Pitt Street, where they hired a neat turn out, and away they went in high spirits. The drive to Botany is pleasant, and there is much to

repay a visit to that place, so famous in the earlier annals of the colony.

When they arrived at the Sir Joseph Banks hotel, Mr. Slyver ordered dinner in two hours; and after sharing a bottle of pale ale, they strolled about the gardens adjoining the hotel, and inspected the large collection of birds and animals, and also the menagerie of wild beasts; after which, they lay on the green sward, and chatted as sociably as old schoolfellows.

"I suppose I must begin to deliver my letters of introduction to-morrow," remarked Christopher, after a short pause in the conversation. "I don't much fancy calling upon strangers with a formal letter in my hand. I am so awfully bashful, especially before ladies, that it makes me quite weak in the knees. I recollect once going to Sheriff Minden's house at Brixton, with a message from my father, and I was shown into a drawing-room where there were seven or eight young ladies, and I only knew one of them. There I sat, looking into my hat for twenty minutes or more; and I knew all the time that the girls were slyly quizzing me, and were ready to break out into giggles as soon as I left the room. I don't like that sort of thing, you know. I would rather by half spend an hour or two in a coal hole, or a cider cellar."

"I perfectly agree with you," replied Slyver, with a sympathizing shrug. "The fact is, I consider introductory letters the greatest encumbrances a traveller has to carry. I threw all mine in the fire when I first arrived in the colony. I did not even present the letter from Lord Gullikin to Mr. ChowlesFitzroy. I strongly advise you to burn yours, Cockle, if you value your freedom: for in nine cases out of ten, the person to whom you are introduced by letter does not care a carrot for you; and if he should, for some private reason, show you any marks of friendship, he will very soon come the paternal, and that is not very pleasant to a young fellow who is out of leading strings. Let me see to whom your letters are addressed, and I will soon estimate their value for you; but I'll make a bet the whole of them are not worth half a dozen dinners."

Christopher pulled out his pocket-book, and produced five or six unsealed letters, which Slyver examined *seriatim*, and commented upon them, without apologizing for his freedom. He professed to know the persons to whom they were directed, and his report was decidedly unfavourable to them all. One person, he said, was a prim old puritan, with two or three daughters as stiff and sombre as ebony images, who would press him into

tract-delivery service at once, and perhaps wheedle him into matrimony, and make him miserable for life. Another he described as a regular old Bunyip, who would be sure to want to sell him a station stocked with scabby sheep, a rotten ship, or a tumble-down house. A third was not a bad sort of man himself; but his family connexions were such as no gentleman could even tolerate. A fourth was miserably poor, and would certainly borrow his money, and probably never repay it. And a fifth was very rich, and too proud to notice any one whose pedigree was not as long as a London directory.

"I would not give you a bottle of ginger-beer for all your letters, Cockle," added Slyver, "and I seriously advise you to tie a big stone to them, and throw them into the sea from the end of the jetty yonder: then you can honestly write home and tell your friends that you delivered your letters at Botany Bay, and all they produced were mere bubbles and froth, as do such missives in general. Some of the simple folks in England, you know, think that Botany Bay means New South Wales proper; so they won't see the little point which will save your honour from the stain of falsehood if your *ruse* is found out at last. Why should you voluntarily set half-a-dozen old fogies and their families, too, to pry into all you do and say in Sydney, and keep the old folks at home posted up every mail? Pooh! absurd! There are many little peccadilloes allowable to a spirited young man, which he would not like his mother and sister to be acquainted with; so just think seriously, Cockle, my friend, before you deliver those letters, and don't subject yourself to the annoying surveillance of a horde of humdrum bores and gossips. But come away, dinner is ready. Excuse my freedom, my dear fellow."

In a few minutes they were seated before an excellent dinner, which had been punctually prepared to the minute. A bottle of sherry was ordered, and they ate, drank, and were merry. Three courses were succeeded by a dessert and a bottle of iced claret; then the waiter retired, and left the gentlemen to their enjoyment of the luxuries on the table, and to unrestrained conversation.

"You need not be afraid of the wine at this establishment, Cockle," observed Slyver; "everything here is first class, as you have before observed, so help yourself, and pass the bottle. I am beginning to enjoy myself amazingly; pass the cigars, Cockle. It is so long since I had the happiness of free converse with a congenial spirit, that I almost fancy myself in another

part of the world again. You remind me uncommonly of my warm friend, Lord Gullikin, Cockle; for you have the exact expression of his lordship about the eyes and mouth, especially when you laugh; you have, indeed. I could almost swear you were related to him, if it were not for your assurances yesterday to the contrary."

Christopher, of course, felt flattered by the comparison; and warmly avowed that he had never in his life before met with a man who had so thoroughly won his affections as Mr. Slyver had: in fact, he did not mind telling him to his face, that he was the most perfect gentleman that he, Christopher, had ever met with;—adding, after draining a bumper to his friend's health, "It's very queer, too—hic—that I should come to Botany Bay itself, to find real, genuine friendship for the first time—hic—ha, ha! very funny. But, as the poet says, 'Many a *gem* is born to blush unseen, and waste its sweetness down in the dark, unfathomed caves of ocean.' I think that's it."

"Just so; and Cowper calls such friendship 'the gem of richest cost.' I perceive you have a taste for the soarings of master minds, Cockle," said Slyver, smiling. "What a sublime theme for a poet's life-study is friendship!"

"Yes, it is, indeed—hic—and many poets have written songs on the subject, only I don't remember any of them—hic—I'll trouble you for another weed, Slyver, my booy! There's no cabbage in these cigars, they beat the London Cubas all to snuff."

Christopher then put his heels upon another chair, put his table napkin over his head to keep the mosquitoes out of his ears, then lighted a cigar, and grew confidential in the extreme, and intensely witty too. I shall not report him *in extenso*, but simply say, that he explained all his private affairs, past and present, and drew a sort of foggy picture of his future career, which his friend said was as clear as sunlight itself; and whenever Christopher seemed for a moment seized with a doubt as to the propriety of letting certain secrets escape his lips at all, Mr. Slyver administered a few soft words and persuasive looks, which were as stimulating as gentle back-stroking to a Tom cat; and Christopher hiccoughed, and smirked, and talked, until his budget of private intelligence was as empty as a bottomless water butt.

Mr. Slyver was most attentive to Christopher's rambling recital, which, he said, was as interesting as a new novel. Then he adroitly drew the elated youth back to the subject of his in-

troductory missives, over which they laughed and joked until Christopher got funny to an excess; and vowed he would serve his letters as old Rakes had served their tortoiseshell cat's last litter of kittens, *i. e.*, drown them all.

Slyver laughed immoderately at his friend's facetious resolution, and they at once proceeded to carry it out; but as Christopher was not steady enough to walk to the end of the jetty without risk of drowning himself as well as his letters, Slyver undertook to *deliver* them, as he jestingly called it, while Christopher sat on the sandy shore to witness the fact. Accordingly, Mr. Slyver tied them to an old brick, (all except the letter to uncle Nick, which was sealed,) then walked slowly to the end of the long jetty. Christopher saw the brick splash into the water, and at the same instant he felt a strange sensation, like cold water splashing his heart; and he fancied that all his honour and self-respect had sunk with the brick.

He stammeringly explained his peculiar qualms to Slyver on his return; when that worthy slapped him on the back encouragingly, and told him not to allow such puerile feelings to annoy him in the least degree, for he had done nothing which the code of fashionable society would condemn. And as they returned to the dining-room he cited so many authentic examples of similar little *evasive expedients* having been resorted to by men of high standing both in public and in private life, that his docile pupil soon began to persuade himself that there was a degree of merit in following such exalted precedents; and finally he snapped his fingers at his conscience; and, borrowing a phrase in common use among the "bricks" of London, told Slyver to "flare up."

Another bottle of claret was then uncorked, and another bundle of cigars was begun, and their revelling recommenced. The poor sleepy birds in the aviary outside were kept nervously active by the loud guffaws which ever and anon burst from Christopher's lungs, as Slyver told story after story, of a class which I dare not soil my paper by even naming; and probably the tigers in the menagerie were kept awake, wondering what strange brutes had come to Botany Bay. After a time it was Christopher's turn to talk, and many of Mr. Waggle's well-worn jokes were passed off as quite fresh, at which Mr. Slyver laughed furiously, and affirmed by an oath that Christopher beat Tom Gigglewit, who was the raciest rascal in their college, and a regular contributor to "Punch."

"Pass the bottle again, Cockle, will you? and let me have

another glance at that locket with that precious insinuating little ringlet coiled up in the centre like a periwinkle's tail. Now I will give you a toast," said Slyver, after he had gazed admiringly on the jewel for a few minutes. "Fill up a bumper, old fellow, then stand up, and take that napkin off your head. Here's to Lizzie Whiffin, the belle of Tooting! May she live to see lots of little Cockles sporting on the pleasant sands of Botany Bay!"

Darkness had long ago shrouded the scenery of Botany, and all the soulless animals around the hotel were deep in their sober slumbers, when Christopher at length began to nod, and to puff away at his cigar without being conscious that its fire was extinct. Mr. Slyver, as he afterwards remarked, regarded those symptoms in his friend as foreshadowings of a troublesome case of "dead drunk;" so he rang the bell for the bill, and at the same time ordered the gig.

"I'll—I'll pay the score—hic. How much is it?" said Christopher, rousing up, and dragging his cheque-book from his pocket, "What's the damage?"

"Excuse me for opposing you for once; but I must firmly protest against your paying a single shilling," said Slyver, taking out his purse. "You are my guest, and I am not going to be pressed into a breach of hospitality. So sit down, there's a good fellow! You are a 'new chum,' you know, as colonials call recent arrivals; so it is strictly my duty to entertain you, and I feel it an honour to do so. No, no, Cockle, old fellow! don't insist, or you will pain me excessively. Principle is everything to me, and I cannot sacrifice it. Come, come, don't be rash; put up your cheque-book. We are gentlemen, you know, and understand each other. By the by, you had better let me put your cheque-book in the pocket of my paletôt, lest you should lose it. Ha, ha, ha! you are the most facetious fellow I ever saw, certainly," he added, as he observed his friend feigning to box with the waiter.

Christopher acknowledged the compliment with a waggish nod; then, tilting his hat aside on his head, to enhance his facetious appearance, he began with tipsy logic to prove that it was *his* duty to pay the piper, because he had never been to Botany Bay before; though he ought to have been there long ago, for he had stolen as many knockers as Lord Tom Noddy himself. He then assured the smirking waiter that he was willing to pay the score like a man, and was able to pay it, too; for he had

plenty of money in the bank, and plenty more at home when that was all spent, and a row of houses at Hackney, beside. Meanwhile, however, Mr. Slyver paid the bill, and said he was ready for a start; but Christopher, having helped himself so often to the contents of the bottle, was unable to help himself into the gig without the aid of the waiter and the hostler.

Having tucked his helpless friend well into the gig, and told him to take care he did not tumble out, Mr. Slyver seized the reins, and drove off. After several narrow escapes from upsetting on the road, they reached Sydney a little before midnight. Another pleasant dispute took place on the subject of paying for the gig, when they got out at the livery stables; but Slyver stoutly declared that he would pay every penny of the day's expenses; whereupon Christopher seized his hand in a transport of admiration, and vowed "that he was the most thorough-bred brick he had ever seen, and beat Launcelot Whiffin into calf's-foot jelly."

CHAPTER XXI.

DESCRIBES Christopher's Sufferings from the Reaction of his overnight's Merriment, and Mr. Slyver's Sympathy therewith. Departure of that Gentleman for Bong Bong, after borrowing Cash and Clothing from Christopher. Midnight Adventure in Mr. M'Scruff's Bedroom.

THE following morning Christopher was unable to rise from his bed ; so after breakfast Slyver entered his room, and softly sympathized with him ; but soon went away, for the ostensible purpose of getting something to alleviate the intense headache and nervous excitement from which the poor youth was suffering. In half an hour he returned, and apologized for his long absence by saying that he had just received a letter containing distressing news.

"But stay, my good fellow ! don't be so excited about it. Fortunately it is nothing that affects your interest in any way," said Slyver ; "and I will not worry you with my troubles this morning, for I see you have rather more of your own than you can patiently bear. Here, drink this glass of seltzer water and sherry, and see if that will rouse you up a bit. You can't stand half as much as I can, that's plain, for you are awfully shaky, while I am as fresh as a live fish. Drink this while it fizzes, and see if it will make you sparkle for a few minutes. This was Lord Gullikin's favourite reviver."

Christopher eagerly drank the proffered restorative, then feebly inquired the nature of the bad news which his friend had just received.

"Why, poor Chizzleton, an old college chum, has just lost his wife, and I must be off to Bong Bong by the first coach to attend her funeral. Chizzy and I were like twin brothers when we were at Oxford, and it would not be kind of me to stay away from him at such a time as this. But I don't like to leave you here all alone, and up to your eyebrows in misery. Don't you think you could brighten up, and go with me ?"

"O, no, no, no !" groaned Christopher. "I could not go a mile this morning, if all my relatives were dying to see me. You have no idea how I suffer !"

"Poor fellow! I am very sorry you are so bad. I was going to ask a trifling favour; but I will not bother you now. I'll run down to Sharking's office."

"What is it? Do tell me. I will do anything you ask me, with pleasure, if I can do it without getting out of bed," whined Christopher. "But I hope I shall be able to get up by and by, and then—O, that cursed claret! Hand me a wet towel, will you?"

"Take my advice, Cockle, and don't stir out of bed to-day, whatever you do," said Slyver, with a very serious look. "There is a hot wind blowing, and you are not yet accustomed to this trying climate; so you might get a sun-stroke, or brain fever. I quite forgot that when I asked you to go with me just now. No, no, don't you stir an inch to-day, my boy, or I shall have the melancholy task of writing home to tell Lizzie that her lover is in Tarham Creek madhouse. What I was going to ask you to do for me is simply this: My agent at the Grubangrabit mines will probably send me a remittance to-morrow or next day; and as I don't care to entrust my money with any one but such as I can place implicit confidence in, I want you to receive any registered letter which may come for me, and pay its contents into the Union Bank to my account. That's all, Cockle; and any day this week will do, so don't worry yourself in the least."

"I will attend to it with pleasure," said Christopher. "I am so sorry you are going away, Slyver, for I shall miss you uncommonly. But is there anything else that I can do for you in your absence?"

"Nothing, thank you: stay, though—I shall want a few pounds to pay my coach hire, and I have not time to run to the bank; so if you will oblige me with a cheque, you can deduct the amount from the remittance: do you see?"

"Exactly so," said Christopher. "Where is my cheque-book? What amount shall I draw for?"

"Let me see: two and three are five, and four are nine—yes, say nine pounds ten; that will do. I shall be back again in a few days, and I never carry more money than I want. Beware of beggars and bushrangers: that's a valuable little bit of advice for you."

Christopher sat up in the bed, and signed the cheque with a very shaky hand, and gave it to his friend, who expressed thanks for the favour; then carelessly remarked, that he should have to hurry to his tailor's, and buy a ready-made suit of black clothes,

though he abhorred slop clothing, and would almost as soon wear a blanket, in black fellows' fashion.

"You need not wear slops at all, Slyver," said Christopher. "If my clothes will fit you, you are welcome to them. There is a new dress-suit in my portmanteau, which you can have the loan of for a few days, or you can give me another suit for it, as you choose. I think it will fit you; but you had better try it on."

"A capital idea, Cockle, if you don't want the togs for a week or so. If you do, you can call at Pugh's, and get a suit on my account. I suppose I *must* wear black to a friend's funeral, though I am sure I should mourn quite as much in a tweed sac, and feel much more comfortable, especially in such warm weather as this. These outward and visible tokens of grief for deceased friends are among the many stupid customs or conventionalities of civilized life which I should like to abolish. By the by, we have not exchanged cards, Cockle. Here is mine, while I think of it; and I should like to have yours, in case I want to write you while I am away."

"Just feel in my breast-pocket for my card-case, Slyver. Oh, my poor head! my poor head!"

"Don't stir, old fellow! pray don't stir! I'll help myself, as the thief said. My address is, 'Care of Jacob Chizzleton, Esq., Bull's-hide, Gunyah, Bong Bong.'" Then, as if suddenly seized with a new thought, Mr. Slyver exclaimed, "I declare I had nearly forgotten my score down below. I must trouble you again, Cockle, my boy! Write me another cheque for seven guineas, will you? Sorry to be such an awful bore to you this morning."

"Pray don't mention it; it's a pleasure," said Christopher, groaning with pain as he sat up in his bed, and signed another cheque for the amount asked for.

"Thank you, thank you, old fellow! You are very bad, I can see, and I am grieved to leave you; but here, drink this," said Slyver, handing Christopher another mixture of sherry and seltzer water. "Now lie down, and keep quiet. Good bye, good bye! I must make haste, or I shall miss the coach. Don't forget my money letter, and give my compliments to the manager of the bank when you call! Tat-taa!"

Christopher's head sank down on his pillow, and Mr. Slyver left the room with the suit of new clothes under his arm; and in his hurry he had put on his friend's new cork ventilator, and left

his own well worn white hat in its place, which little circumstance Christopher was too ill to observe.

It was quite dark when Christopher next opened his eyes, and he lay for a time, in a pitiable state of excitement, unable to remember where he was, or to form a rational idea from his rolling brain. At length, consciousness partially returned, and with it a sense of feverish thirst, and a palsy in every limb. The sultry wind which had been blowing all day was succeeded at night—as it usually is in Sydney—by a fierce gale from the south; and a violent thunderstorm shook the building, which added to Christopher's intense perturbation. With difficulty he got out of bed and opened his door. All was dark without, but a glimmering light at the end of the corridor inspired a hope that some of the servants were still out of bed; so he groped his way to the head of the stairs, and often repeated his plaintive whine for Sancho, the under waiter. Receiving no reply, and being conscious of a strong draught up the stairway, he instinctively resolved to return to his bedroom and dress himself; then to go down stairs, procure a light, and see if that would assist him to understand his mysterious position.

Back he groped his way through the darkness, in mortal dread of centipedes under his feet, and entered a half-opened doorway; but, on feeling his way to the chair at the foot of his bed, his hand grasped a naked human foot, with long chisel-shaped nails on the toes. Simultaneously with Christopher's exclamation of horror, the foot shrank from his hand, and a wrathful voice, with a Caledonian idiom, demanded, "Wha the deil taket holt o' my toe?"

"Hoo-o! goodness gracious, where am I?" yelled Christopher, springing back, and overturning a towel-horse, which further frightened him. The next instant he felt a rough hand grasp his throat, and a gruff voice roar out, "Thieves! Robbers! Thieves! Bring a light, Jock! Hoot, look aleeve, Sancho, Jock; there's thieves in the hoose. I've got ane o' them fast enow. Tut, mon! haud yer skreeling, or I'll brain ye wie my bootjack! Ding it a', bring a light, Jock!"

In a short time, two or three sleepy waiters appeared with lights, and revealed a number of alarmed lodgers, who had sprung from their beds into the corridor at the startling shouts of the Scotchman; but whether they were soldiers, or sailors, or civilians, no person would have been able to decide by a look at their limited clothing. A group speedily gathered round the door

of the chamber where the irate Caledonian was firmly grasping Christopher's throat, and charging him, in broad Scotch, with murderous and burglarious designs upon his person and property; while Christopher stammered out loud protestations of innocence, and appeals for mercy.

"Avast there, M'Scruff! Don't scrag the poor wretch, without Judge or jury," said the bronze-faced Captain before mentioned, stepping forward in his night gear. Fair play, shipmate! Fair play! give him a dog's chance to howl, before you choke him. Let go his throat, and hear what he has to say for himself. I'll engage he shall not run away. He looks a precious sight more like a fool than a rogue, that is my opinion; but avast, let me talk to him a bit. Halloa, red shirt! tell us what you were doing in this gentleman's state-room!" he added, in a brusque tone, and looking keenly into Christopher's twitching face.

"I don't know, I'm sure," whined Christopher; "I have only just woke up, and I wanted to know what's o'clock."

"Hey! ma gudeness! hear thot, gentlemen," exclaimed the excited Scot: then, looking fiercely at poor Christopher, he added, "An ye coomed into ma room to leeft ma watch an chain, did ye?"

"No, no, Sir; nothing of the sort, I assure you on my honour. I'm a gentleman, Sir, and I've got a watch of my own, only it's stopped, and I could not see it in the dark. I did not know I was in your room at all until I felt your foot. I didn't, indeed, Sir. It's an unfortunate mistake, for which I beg your pardon very humbly."

"Perhaps he has been walking in his sleep," suggested the Captain. "I never heard of a thief breaking into a house in his shirt. I think he is a lodger. I say, What's-ye-name, didn't I see you at the supper table a few evenings ago?"

"Yes, Sir; I think I recollect your face. My name is Christopher Cockle. I came out in the 'Calabash,' and I can prove I am a gentleman. I have plenty of money in the —— Bank, and don't want to rob anybody: in fact, I would rather give the gentleman a watch than steal one from him. Please to let me go to my room, and dress myself."

"Were you drunk last night?" asked another of the lookers on.

"I am not quite sure if it was last night, Sir; but I candidly confess that I have been drunk lately. Pray let me go, for I am catching cold in my legs."

After a further cross-examination, a majority of the gentlemen present declared their belief that it was only a blunder. The mollified Scotchman admitted "that it micht be sae, but it lookit unco queer for an honest mon to be creepin an crawlin aboot in his neebour's chamber in the dark." Christopher was then conducted to his bedroom by the waiter, and was there left to his reflections, which were far from being comforting.

For two days ensuing he kept his bed, and was nursed by an attentive waiter, who seemed to understand his disorder, and whose doubts as to his patient's honesty were all removed by the liberal manner in which he had recompensed the service of his attendant, and his confiding habit of leaving his drawers and trunks unlocked.

On the third morning Christopher felt much better, so he dressed himself, and, after breakfast, strolled leisurely down towards the "Calabash." In passing the Circular Quay, he saw a party of sailors carrying the dead body of one of their shipmates, who had tumbled off the stage into the water the previous night, while going on board his ship intoxicated.

The sight of the corpse had a sickening effect upon Christopher, and he hastily turned away from the ghastly spectacle. Presently, he met Tim Rafferty, without his hat, running in a state of great excitement.

"What is the matter, Tim?" asked Christopher, stopping him.

"Shure, Sir, an I'm jist goin to see iv that dead man is little Bob, the lamp boy. He didn't come aboard last night, an I'm feerd he's been gittin dhrunk an dhrowndin himself."

"That is not Bob, I am sure," said Christopher. "It is the body of a full grown man of six feet, or more; so you need not go to look at him."

"Still an all it may be Bob, Sir, an I'd like to go an have a look, to make sartin. I've heerd tell as how corpses are allers longer when they are dead than whin they are alive. I'll be back agin in a minute, Sir."

Off ran Tim, and Christopher proceeded on board the "Calabash." Captain Toffey was not on board, and the officers and crew were all very busy, taking in stores and coal for their homeward voyage; so Christopher walked into the grand saloon, and thence to the lower saloon. He took a peep into his old cabin, and was beginning to swell over with emotions which old recollections created, when Tim descended the ladder, and

first of all explained that Bob was in the watchhouse, safe and sound, so the dead body did not belong to him at all.

"I am glad you are come, Tim," said Christopher, "for I was beginning to be very lonely. The sight of these empty cabins makes me feel miserable."

"Throth, an I don't wonder a bit at that, honey," said Tim; "an don't I feel it, too, an no mishtake? A feller is never satisfied, an that's a fact, as the wrecked sailor sed, whin he had nothin to ate but raw periwinkles for six weeks. Whin I was bothered with them Rooshuns on the passage out, I used to wish meself buried alive at the bottom of the say; but since I've bin aboard here, all alone wid my little Bob in the 'tween decks to speak till, I've bin as dreary as a feller digging his own grave, soh! an I've thought I'd rayther be in a crowd widout boots on. Arrah, Misther Cockle, I whisht ye wos goin back agin wid us, so I do; for I don't like to lave yez all alone in this big counthry widout a friend in the worrld."

"Why don't you stay in Sydney, then, Tim?" asked Christopher, who had conceived a sudden idea of engaging Tim as his confidential *valet-de-chambre*.

"Well, Sir, there's many points to be considered, as the thief said when he broke into the cutler's shop in the dark. In the firsht place, you see, Sir, I *must* go home agin, that's sartin. In the next place"—

"Never mind any more reasons, Tim. If you want to go, that is to say, if you *must* go home, I will not try to persuade you to stay. You will, of course, go and see my friends, as you promised."

"To be shure I will, Sir, the very minute I git clear ov the ship; an I'll tell em somethin about yez, never fear."

"You know what to say, Tim—hem—that is to say, of course you can say I have been very steady, you know"—

"Och, winki fum!" shouted Tim, with a peculiar shrug and elevation of his eyebrows.

"What do you mean by that, Tim?" asked Christopher, looking reproachfully, and inclined to be wrathful, as people usually are when their failings are hinted at. "I don't understand what 'winki fum' signifies in plain English."

"No offince, Sir, not the laste in life," said Tim. "Shure an yez don't mane to think I'm goin home to break yer father an mother's hearts intirely by tellin em all I knows about yez? Not I, honey! Never fear, leave me alone to make things smooth, as the big serpent said when he got in among the young

rabbits. I'll tell em all the good news I can think of, Sir; an they'll be glad enough to hear it, I'll bet a wager; but sorra a bit ov bad news will I tell em at all, I'm not sich a guffy as to do that. Nobody likes to hear bad news, an the man as carries it isn't much respected, an that's nateral enough. Niver you fear, Sir, I'll spin em a yarn as ull make the blissed old crathers look as plaised as Punch an Judy.

"But there's one thing as I want to spake ta yez about, Sir, afore I forget it, an it's been lying on my conscience as heavy as a keg o' nails, for ever so long. It's one of the dhirty tricks that the love of grog timpted me to do, in spite ov me rayson, and very sorry I am for it, soh. I ax yez to forgive me, Misther Cockle. Shure enow it's the only ugly trick I iver did to yez, an that's as thrue as I'm a livin sinner."

"Tell me what it is that is troubling you, Tim," said Christopher, kindly. "I never knew you guilty of dirty tricks, I am sure."

"This is it, Sir; I made ye belave as how I hove all your elder wine overboard, and sorra a dhrop did I heave away, barrin the impty bottles; I drank ivery blissed haporth of it, a haythin as I am. Dear knows what I'll say til yer mother about it, that bothers me intirely, an makes me wish the molly-grubs had eaten all the elderberries, thin the wine wudn't have bin made at all; bad luck ta it."

"Never mind that, Tim. My mother will not ask about it; and, if she does, you can tell her that I would not drink it, so you thought it was a pity to waste it, and you drank it. She will be pleased enough with that explanation."

"Troth, an that's the blissed truth, too, Sir, so it is. I'll tell her that, shure enow. Dashed iv I tell any lies about it, cos I've found by expayrience that there's no luck at all in tellin lies; if they help a feller out of one scrape, they'll rin him into fifty worser ones, take my wordd for it, Sir.

After giving some lengthy instructions to Tim, what to say to his parents, his sister, to Lizzie, and other friends at home, and promising to see him again before the "Calabash" sailed, Christopher left the ship, with a heavy heart. He lunched at a refectory in George Street, and, after spending an hour or two in confidential conversation with his agent, Mr. Janus Thugman, he retraced his way to the Royal Hotel.

CHAPTER XXII.

CONTAINS Christopher's graphic Letters to his Parents, his Sister, and to Launcelot Whiffin, embodying his Views on a Variety of interesting Subjects.

As Christopher was returning to the hotel, he saw, in passing, at the General Post Office, a notice that a mail would be made up for London in a few days; so duty suggested that he should write to his parents. His heart complied at once, and he went on his way humming, "Home, sweet home," and mentally drafting an epistle at the same time.

Directly after tea he ascended to his bedroom, threw off his coat and cravat, unlocked his writing-desk, and sat down before it with determination in his looks. But the task of composing a letter was as troublesome to him as translating Greek; for the extent of his epistolary experience was confined to the usual formal letter which preceded the periodical breaking up at school, and an occasional epistle to his grandmother, with furtive designs upon that good-natured old lady's pocket. He sat for some time raking his hair with his fingers, to arrange the stops of his intellectual organs, wishing the while that his accomplished friend Slyver were near to lubricate his rusty pen. Presently his ideas began to flow, slowly but sweetly, like treacle in frosty weather; and the following affectionate effusion was the result: an epistle which two or three months afterwards produced an unprecedented sensation at Turtle-shell Lodge.

"ROYAL HOTEL, SYDNEY, *March*, '55.

"HONOURED PARENTS,

"I TAKE this favourable opportunity to write you, as a post will leave for London in a day or two; and I dare say you will like to hear from your own darling Kit, as you used to call me. I hope this will find you well, as it leaves me at present, with the exception of a slight cold in my head, and a sore finger, which prevents me writing steadily.

"I landed safely in Sydney on the —— of February, and was very glad to feel myself alive and well after the perils of the mighty deep, and the pain of separating from all that my fond heart holds so dear. My diary, which I send you herewith, will give you a faint idea of the dreadful dangers and hardships I have passed through since I left my happy home at Tooting, —that venerated pile, every brick of which is at this moment in my eye. My diary, also, contains a description of all my fellow-passengers, (which I dare say will be interesting to you, as you will naturally like everybody who sat at the same table with me for three months;) and, though my ideas may not always be clearly expressed, owing to the rocking of the ship, and the noise of the children playing at honeypots under my cabin window, you will find a surprising amount of information in my log, and you will see that I have attended to your admonitions, and have kept my eyes and ears open, and my wits well honed, as Mr. Toddle says.

"I am sorry to inform you that the good ship 'Calabash' is to return to England directly, as her owners, who are all very nice men, though rather nervous, are beginning to fear that the tastes of lucky diggers are inclining towards cheaper mediums of conveyance than the extra splendid arrangements of the 'Calabash' Company can meet. I feel for the shareholders very much, especially for Captain Toffey and Mr. Allspyce, who seem as sorrow-stricken as little orphan boys. I have been told that it cost ten thousand pounds at least to coal and victual the 'Calabash' on the voyage out here, so you may fancy the vast consumption there was continually going on; and it must be grievous indeed to the owners to have to coal and victual the 'Calabash' for the voyage home again without getting anything more substantial in return than the jokes and gibes of an unfeeling public at both sides of the world. But they shall ever have my gratitude for conveying me out here safe and sound; and Mr. Waggle says he will never forget the ninety good dinners he got on board, and he will ever remember the discriminating passengers, who, before parting with him, presented him with a gold watch in token of their admiration and appreciation of his social virtues.

"If you should see Captain Toffey on his return, please to invite him to the Lodge, and comfort him all you can, for he often comforted me. Indeed, he comforted everybody but himself. It was such fun to see him play 'Fillippene,' or double-nuts, with the young ladies almost every morning; and when

they won kid gloves from him, he used to look as pleased as an old buck smelling buttercups, as Mr. Welps remarked.

"Tim Rafferty was very kind to me, too; and has proved that there is truth in the old song which says, that 'Love is the soul of a neat Irishman.' He has promised to carry a shark's head and shoulders to the Lodge as a present to dear Father; so you will please reward Tim for his trouble. You will see in my diary the details of how the shark was caught, and a list of the extraordinary articles which were found in his maw. By the by, I did not see them myself, but my friend Mr. Welps did, and gave me the list, and one of the legs of the easy chair which he said was sticking in the shark's gizzard. I bought the head and shoulders very cheap from the boatswain, who has embalmed them very nicely with Stockholm tar, and stuffed them with oakum. I think they would look unique if hung up in the hall opposite to the goat's head, or stuck on top of the umbrella-stand.

"I have also sent a dried flying-fish for Sophy, an albatross's foot for a tobacco pouch for Uncle Peter, a black gin's 'dilly bag' for dear grandmother, and the screw end of a rusty thunderbolt that fell on a sailor's head one night, which you will please to send to Mr. Nouse for his museum, with my respectful duty. I gave the boatswain a bottle of rum for it, but you needn't say I got it so cheap.

"I spent two or three days in Melbourne, and was much delighted with my visit, as well as astounded at the extent of the place, and the crowds of people in it. It is a wonderful place, with a population as mixed as London society was at the time of the Great Exhibition. Men from all nations of the earth were there, of all shades of colour and all shapes of beard, and ladies with latest London-made bonnets, and other comical costumes. I was introduced to some of the high officials of the city, who showed me marked attention.

"It is not true that gold is to be picked up in the streets; unless occasionally, when dropped by a drunken digger or a runaway thief; and I saw many persons walking about with their hands in their pocket, who looked as if they would be very glad to pick up copper. If my remarks on Melbourne in my diary are not very lucid, it is owing to the heat of the climate and the noise and bustle of the city, which was worse than Cheapside on a Saturday morning, or Cow Cross Street on Bartlemy Fair day.

"While I think of it, please to send word to old Daddy Grimes

the grave-digger, that he had better stay at home, where he can get barley-bread, and peace with it; for though I am told there is a brisk trade in his line in Melbourne, it is not very lucrative in general. The rich people pay well for being buried,—they always do, everywhere,—and the master undertakers make large profits, and grow rich; but the bulk of the customers spend all their money just before they want a grave; then the coroner or the government ‘rattle their bones over the stones’ by contract, and that wouldn’t suit old Grimes, for he has been accustomed to do his work well. Besides, I am told these colonies are not good places for old folks to come to, if they depend solely upon the labour of their hands; for few persons care to employ ‘old crawlers,’ (as they are called by the natives,) when there are lots of young men and women to be had.

“Sydney is a much older city than Melbourne; and, as Mr. Slyver says, it has more in its surroundings to enchant a poet or a painter: still, Melbourne is the largest place, and there is more bustle in it; it has a much larger harbour than Sydney, with much larger waves in it. The people of Sydney look steadier than the Melbournites. Mr. Slyver says they are older colonists, so ought to know better; besides, there is not so much ‘Tom Tiddler’s ground’ about Sydney, so not near as many diggers; and there are only about five hundred public-houses in Sydney and the suburbs. I will let you know when I have decided which place I like best.

“I have been staying at the Royal Hotel since I landed, which is a building nearly as big as the Fishmongers’ Hall, at London Bridge; though it is not so grand by any means. There are lots of lodgers of a superior class staying here at the present time, and I am getting a deal of colonial experience in my intercourse with them. I have conceived a strong taste for pastoral pursuits; for the squatters—as a class—are such fine, hearty, gentlemanly fellows, and so rich! One extensive grazier has invited me to his station, on Bogie Plains, to get an insight into cattle; but I rather prefer sheep, because I am told I can catch them at any time with a hook, and it would be a hard job for such a rider as myself to catch a flock of cattle, especially if they were rather wild. But I have made up my mind to pay a visit to Uncle Nicholas before I decide upon my future operations, and shall strictly follow your injunctions, to act cautiously and deliberately; and I trust I shall prove myself a genuine Cockle.

"I delivered all my letters of introduction at Botany Bay; they were rather coolly received, but I will let you know more when I next allude to them. I am very careful of my money, and of my health; and, of course, I am particular in choosing persons of taste and refinement for my associates, ever keeping in mind that excellent large text copy of Mr. Nouse's, 'Avoid bad company.' You can mention that to Mr. Nouse, and I know it will delight him; and tell him I am gaining wisdom every day.

"You will be pleased to know that I am growing fat, too; my white waistcoats will not button by two inches and a half, and my cheeks are quite chubby. I am told that passengers commonly get fat on the voyage out, unless they have a surly Captain and a stingy steward; but they soon get thin if they arrive here in summer time, especially if they fidget themselves about the weather, or eat too many peaches. The mosquitoes have dotted me all over like Sophy's pink spotted muslin frock; but I am told they only bite new comers for the first month or two, that I am by no means to mistake their little marks of affection for me for spitefulness, and that when the weather gets cooler, their sharp little snouts will get as limp as camel's hairs.

"I think this is a surprising place for making money, and there are many ways of investing it too, which I have not time to explain. I have seen lots of men riding in their carriages, who (as my friend Slyver remarked) would at one time have been glad of a lift in a costermonger's donkey cart, or on the spikes of a postchaise; but I certainly think that is more to their credit, if they have got their carriages honestly; besides, I must say I do not endorse all Slyver's cynical sayings, and I am very careful in my inductions, as you have doubtless observed.

"I shall continue my diary, and note therein any remarkable thing I hear and see, as you desired me to do, and will send you my budget by every opportunity. If Cousin Solomon likes to print any of my remarks for the enlightenment of intending emigrants, you can let him do so; but he had better withhold my name, lest I get 'bonnetted,' as they call it. I think that books containing experimental information on the colonies, such as I flatter myself I can furnish, would sell well at the present time, when all eyes are looking this way, and the gold of Australia is in everybody's mouth, if not in their pockets. I can furnish raw material for any number of books, as you will see;

and Solomon is a genius who can furbish up dry facts, and make them shine like new shoes, as he once remarked to me.

"I have discovered, by carefully keeping my ears open and my wits about me, that 'Cork rose butter' will pay cent. per cent.; so you had better ship some immediately by a fast sailing 'Black-Baller,'—say a thousand kegs. This information I gleaned from a wealthy storekeeper from the diggings, whom I also overheard to say that he sold one-pound tins of codfish for fifteen pence, which must leave an immense profit. I give you the facts, and leave you to go into figures, as they say in Sydney.

"To show you how cautious I am, and also to prove the necessity for looking sharp, I mention a little incident which occurred yesterday. I asked a gentleman who sat beside me at the dinner table, if he could advise me of a good paying mercantile speculation; when he immediately replied, with hypocritical seriousness, that it would be a rare spec to ship a cargo of hatters' blocks to Fiji. Of course I thanked him politely for his counsel; but, upon making further inquiries during the day, I learned that those simple South Sea islanders wear no head covering of any sort except now and then a barbarous sort of wig.

"I have been introduced to a very pleasant sort of man named Thugman, who has offered his services as agent and general mercantile adviser. He seems a surprisingly clever man of business, and knows the ins and outs of every thing you can mention. I think he is a very proper man, too; for he gave me such a lot of solemn warnings to beware of the wicked villany of the world the very first time I saw him, and he has advised me upon no end of subjects beside, and begged me to confide in him as a brother. He says he is highly connected, too; his aunt's husband is the head of the firm of Grind'em, Small, and Co., of Tooley Street, London, and of Galliwall, East Indies, with branches everywhere. I like Thugman very much, and have promised to go and spend a night at his suburban villa, when I return from Uncle's.

"Mr. Thugman offered to sell me a ship yesterday for half her value, and assured me on his honour that there was nothing the matter with her, only her copper was crumpled, and there was a little hole somewhere, which of course could easily be stopped up with a penn'orth of oakum. But I shall take your advice, my dear Father, and buy nothing until I have bought—or rather have picked up—experience.

"Please to give my love to Sister,—but I am going to write to

her,—and also to dear Grandmother, and to Uncle Peter. So no more at present from,

“My honoured parents,

“Your ever dutiful son,

“CHRISTOPHER COCKLE.

“P.S.—I forgot to mention that a few days before the ‘Calabash’ reached Sydney, the passengers presented the Rev. Mr. Racey with a purse of sovereigns, as an expression of their affection for him, and their appreciation of his efforts to promote peace and good-will on board.”

Christopher read the foregoing epistle over with evident satisfaction ; for he rubbed his hands and chuckled at it like a conjuror who had just discovered a new trick. He then descended to the long room, drank a glass of brandy, and smoked a cigar ; then reascended to his chamber, and penned the following letter to his sister :—

“MY ADORABLE SISTER SOPHY,

“How I wish you were beside me now, to behold the beauties of this gorgeous hemisphere, which I cannot spare time to picture to you ! My heart swells with bygone visions of home and happiness as I write, and my fancy brings before me the green lanes of Tooting, till I imagine I am picking blackberries, with you, my sweet Sophy, by my side, looking as beautiful as a gipsy queen. But, alas ! the days are past that we have seen, happy days of bygone pleasures vanished into the blue ether of oblivion,—as the poet says ; and fifteen thousand miles of mountainous waves and roaring billows separate two of the fondest hearts that ever beat within human bosoms.

“But a truce to the lofty soarings of my disconsolate young soul. I must quit the ambrosial regions of poetry, in which we both so delight to revel, and descend into the cold, dull world—cold indeed to me, when lacking the genial influence of my charming Sophy’s sweet honey-breathing smiles and loving words of sympathy and tenderness, such as only ethereal mortals can impart or appreciate.

“I have taken up my pen to write these few lines, hoping to find you well, as I am at present. You will doubtless be delighted at reading my diary, and you can show it to Lizzie Whiffin if you like, while you mingle your tears of sympathy over my sorrows and sufferings. The moon peeps at me through

my lonely chamber window as I write, and I stop to reflect that the soft beams of that same pale luminary have often glistened in the tear-drops which have fallen from those lovely eyes for me—yes, for me: O, happy moonbeams! But I am getting poetical again; and, alas! the chilling idea that colder eyes than thine may scan my page, checks the warm gushings over of my heart, and stops the frozen current of my soul—as the poet says.

“We used to praise our peaches, Sophy, that grew up against the stable wall at the lodge; but they were mere gooseberries compared with the peaches in Sydney—such whoppers! and so cheap, too; only think, fourpence a dozen for prime fruit, big as little turnips. Then the bananas, and figs, and water melons, and pine apples are surpassingly beautiful: only the worst of it is, one is apt to be tempted to eat too many, and get cholera morbus, which is a disagreeable complaint in this climate.

“Sydney is a very dusty place in dry weather, and very warm, too, when the wind is hot. I saw a young lady’s parasol blown away the other day in a high wind, and as I ran after it up the street, I thought of your blushes when your hat blew into the sea from among the crowd of visitors on Ramsgate Pier, that windy day last summer: and I called to mind your vexation, too, when that rude boatman offered to pick up your hat for ‘five bob,’ the nasty fellow! Don’t you recollect it, dear?

“I have met with such a very dear friend since I came to Sydney. I should like you to see him, Sophy. He is quite a polished gentleman; was bred at college, and lent money to lots of young lords. His name is Frederick Fitzchowse Slyver, (aristocratic, is it not?) and I think he is owner of a gold mine, or a mine of some other sort. He is surprisingly fond of me; and to show his confidence in my tact and honour, I mention the significant little fact that he has empowered me to receive and open all his money letters while he is away from Sydney. I expect him back in a few days, when I will coax him to sit for his photograph, and will send it to you, though, of course, I shall not let him know it; and you need not show it to Jacob Moon, unless you want it to cause a total eclipse. Mind, I do not know if Slyver is engaged or not, but I will let you know in my next.

“The young ladies of Sydney are very lovely, certainly; but their charms are powerless to fascinate my heart while there is indelibly impressed upon it the image of one whose charms far outvie them all; and that angelic little picture is my

sister Sophy, my peerless, ever adorable, sweet sister Sophy ! I have not yet seen a black woman since I landed ; I believe there are plenty in the bush, but I hope I shall not meet with any ; for I am told they dress in shocking bad taste—that is, when they dress at all. I have not forgotten Lizzie Whiffin, and you can tell her that my friend Slyver very much admired her hair in the locket which she gave me, and said it was the most fascinating little curl that he had ever seen.

“ You can tell Rakes that I have had a lesson in driving from Mr. Slyver, who used to drive his own drag to the Derby. Don’t forget to take care of my dog Dash, and my white mice ; and tell Sally Mander that good cooks get fifteen shillings a week in Sydney. I told her I would let her know the rate of wages out here.

“ My whiskers are beginning to grow, but I cut them off once a week with my nail-scissors, in order to strengthen them. I send you a sample of them in the silver-paper enclosed, for your opinion. Slyver says they are as soft as a silkworm’s cocoon. I should like you to send me, in your next letter, a leaf from the ivy plant which grows up against Lizzie’s bedroom chimney ; also a feather from your canary’s tail. I will write you again very soon, and will continue to keep a diary, and note therein all the fashionable intelligence from this southern metropolis for your especial edification. I send you a lot of kisses, thus So no more at present from

“ Your ever loving Brother,

“ CHRISTOPHER.”

When he had smilingly completed the above mental effort, Christopher went below to the billiard-room, to stimulate his enervated faculties after their extraordinary exercise during the last few hours. As he sat and puffed his pipe, and sipped his toddy, his mind was pleasingly picturing the sensation which those letters would cause at home. He could see with fancy’s eye his mother and sister crying with rapture, and with fancy’s ear he could hear his sturdy old sire blowing his nose, the usual manly mode of easing off heart emotions. He could see Lizzie Whiffin blush and tremble at his delicate allusion to her, and old Sally Mander’s astonishment at the rate of cooks’ wages in Sydney, and her joy, too, that the dear young master had not forgotten her. He could fancy Sophy’s and Lizzie’s ecstasy of admiration at the high finish and the poetical style of his

composition, and he hoped they would not discover that he had pirated his brightest ideas from the popular romance of "The Broken Heart."

Presently his fanciful reverie was disturbed by the loud conversation of two gentlemen, who were comparing the bargains that they had picked up during the day at the celebrated Charley Topper's auction rooms, and speculating on what they might meet with on the morrow. Christopher's ears were open in a moment at the mention of bargains, and he soon ascertained that the extensive drapery stock of a Mr. Wrackem was being sold off without reserve. He also gained many little stray bits of information about the present and probable state of the import market, which he carefully entered in his note-book. After further strengthening his nerves with another glass of toddy, he returned to his chamber, fully resolved to pay a visit to Mr. Topper's mart next morning, not with a view to purchasing, but merely to see how such large sales were effected; for he had never seen an auction, except the one in Melbourne, where he had made the unlucky random bid for the musical clock. Having thus planned his work for the morrow, he proceeded to finish his work for the night by resuming his pen, and writing the following letter to his quondam friend Launcelot Whiffin, of Maze Pond:—

"WHIFFY, my boy! how are you?

"If I had a pole long enough, I would poke it through the world's core and touch you up, as the fellow does the bears in the Zoological Gardens. I am just now right over you, though you think I am under you; so mind what you are about, my pippin, or I'll upset your gallipots. What a queer thing it is, when you come to think of it, that we should be feet to feet, as it were, and yet neither of us should tumble into the stars! How queer, too, that while you are perhaps just now preparing for your noon-day pint of Barclay Perkins, with the chill off, I am here nodding from the effects of my evening toddy, and in two minutes after I have finished this note I shall be rolling on my red-hot bed, listening to the lullaby of the night watchman outside, roaring, 'Past twelve o'clock;' and that while I am now perspiring, with my coat and vest off, with my window wide open, and, as *Milton* says, 'almost ready to get out of my flesh, and sit in my bones, to cool myself,' you are perhaps huddled up in your overcoat and railway wrapper, with a book in your lap, shivering over your workhouse allowance.

of fire, in your front attic, amid genial showers of soot from your smoky chimney. These reverses of circumstances, or contrarieties, are really astounding, when you come to study them; and some sublime ideas may be extracted from the little sparks of thought which I have struck from my alcoholized brain, and which I commend to the metaphysical analysis of the learned conclave of 'Pestles and Mortars,' who, I suppose, as formerly, pay occasional visits to your den; and who, I hope, are all as well as this leaves me at present. Give my love to them, and tell them to 'flare up, and join the union.'

"Whiffy, my buck! I have such lots to tell you, if I wasn't so sleepy, and if this confounded pen of mine would write straight. It is prime to be your own master, and comptroller of your own purse; to be free to get happy and glorious overnight, without trembling at the prying eyes and inquisitive remarks of 'the governor,' the next morning; to carry your pipe in your waistcoat pocket, without dread of your sister's little mischievous nose smelling it out; and to keep a sly bottle under your bed, without danger of the housemaid ferreting it out with her broom, and carrying it down to your mother. It is delightful to be free from the fear of that odious term, 'Master,' (which all boys hate as soon as they substitute long-tailed coats for jackets;) and to feel that you are actually a man, a real Mister, by common consent, and nobody knows you were anything else. It is glorious to be able to eat and drink as much as you like, to dress as you like, to go where you like, and not be forced to do anything that you don't like. This is liberty, Whiffy, my booy! and I wish you were here to enjoy its pure air with me, instead of spending your brightest days amidst dead men's bones, and all sorts of nasty things.

"Hurra for manhood suffrage! and this is the land to see its glorious fruit. Advance Australia, and three cheers for Sam Shicer! May he never want a cold potato, as the poet says. By the by, if you see Sam, tell him to write to me, care of my agent, Janus Thugman, Esq., Sydney; and, if this letter does not induce you to come out here by the first ship, write me often. I am going to visit old Nick next week. (I mean, Uncle Nick.) I will let you know in my next if my cousins are jet black, or only copper-coloured.

"The native girls—white ones, I mean, of course—are beautiful as swans. By the by, Whiffy, don't you remember the swans scaring us from our clothes when we were bathing above Kew Bridge, last Queen's birthday? There are plenty of black swans

out here, and millions of white cockatoos and poll-parrots in the bush; but I have not seen any yet. I am going to buy a gun before I go to uncle's; for I am told I may shoot as much game as I like, or as much as I can, without asking for leave or licence.

"I have met with a regular jewel of an agent, who has put me up to a variety of 'moves' for making money; and the thing is to be done here, like winking. As soon as I can say I have ten thousand pounds of my own, I shall return to London; and then won't we astonish the whitebait at Greenwich, and Van Joel at Evans's? I will let you know more about my speculations in my next; but you must not tell the 'governor,' as, of course, he cannot judge what is best for me to do out here; besides, he is so plaguy cautious, and used to be always cramming my ears with his first bushel of periwinkles. If my keen friend here sees a lucky spec, he goes slash at it, as the saying is among you medical men, in a way that would make my 'old boy' stare like a dead salmon. There is no mistake about Janus Thugman being a sharp shaver; and he can make money like a London smasher. He knows all the ins and outs of business, as the saying is; so he is just the man for me, for I don't know much about it; and, the fact is, I don't want to be pestered with it, so long as he hands me the profits, which he has faithfully promised to do, and to act for me as though he were acting for himself. I shall let him manage all my mercantile matters while I am rustivating in the country, and cultivating my beard.

"The mosquitoes are horning me through my cane chair, so I must conclude. Good bye, old fellow. Write soon.

"Yours till death,

"CHRISTOPHER COCKLE."

"*To Launcelot Whiffin, Esq.,*

"*Maze Pond, London.*"

CHAPTER XXIII.

CONTAINS an Account of Christopher's Visit to Mr. Charles Topper's Auction Mart, to acquire an Insight into the Mode of doing Business in Sydney, and describes the annoying Results of his Visit, and his pugilistic Encounter with the savage Cobbler.

THE principal streets of Sydney were thronged with cabs and omnibuses, and with private conveyances of all kinds, graduating from the dashing carriage of the wealthy landowner and the merchant prince, to the doctor's hooded buggy, the broker's dog-cart, the up-country bullock-dray, and the advertising van, down to the long-lunged tinker's rattle-trap, and the itinerant fishmonger's barrow. Bustling business men were hurrying to and fro, with eagerness in their eyes, and desire in their hearts, to make twice as much money or merchandise as they at that moment possessed. Everybody seemed bent upon doing something before dinner time, except those slouching idlers, who are to be seen everywhere, whose shambling gait and drowsy looks implied that they would prefer to do nothing, even if they had nothing for dinner.

It was eleven o'clock A.M., or about the sharpest part of the day in the mercantile world; for by that time most folks had comfortably digested their breakfast, and had not begun to crave for luncheon. So it was with Christopher, however, who issued from his hotel, and walked briskly along the hot pavement, and through the perspiring crowds in George Street, in the prideful belief that he was rather more wide awake than the majority of the pedestrians.

The sun was bright, and the air was sultry, for the sea-breeze was late in rising on that morning; and Christopher felt that his nankeen umbrella and his white buckskin boots, which he had purchased on the previous day, were very great comforts. And though the Chinese pagoda-shaped hat, which he had bought at the Cape, slightly attracted the notice of the passers by, he tried to persuade himself that he did not care for public opinion so much as for personal convenience and security from sun-stroke; so onward he went, beating his right calf with his

newly-acquired riding-whip, and hoping in his heart that folks would think he was a squatter just come down from the country, from his annual wool-gathering.

Turning the corner into King Street, he soon crossed over, and turned another corner into Pitt Street; and in half a minute more he entered Mr. Charles Topper's auction just as that celebrated salesman issued from a side door into the sale-room, and bowed politely to the motley assemblage before him.

"Now, gentlemen, if you please, pay attention to the terms and conditions of sale," said Mr. Topper, nimbly mounting upon an empty packing-case, and tapping the counter two or three times with a little ivory hammer; then forthwith he began to read a printed document, with very rapid utterance, and occasionally emphasizing particular parts by flourishing his hammer in the air, and looking surprised at the very liberal terms.

Mr. Topper was a gentleman about middle height, of fair and florid complexion, with grey eyes, sharp as glaziers' diamonds; but their peculiar twinkle occasionally, and a quizzical movement of his mouth at the same time, clearly indicated that he was fond of a bit of fun when he could afford it. And that induction was borne out by facts; for on holiday occasions Mr. Topper might be seen mounted on his chestnut thoroughbred, as keenly enjoying the sports of the day at Homebush as any jockey on the course. At the head of his festive board, too, Mr. Topper sparkled like his own Sillery; and at such times he was as familiar with his numerous assistants as with old friends. But business was business with him, and few men in Sydney understood it better, or managed it more successfully than he did; indeed, the fortunate career of himself, and of his brothers, too, are striking examples of what may be effected in the colony by the intelligent study of business ramifications, and diligent attention to them.

"Now, gentlemen, you have all heard the terms and conditions of sale," continued Mr. Topper, after he had finished those customary preliminaries. "They are very liberal, you have observed. Favour me with your biddings quickly this morning, if you please; for I have a very large quantity of goods to get through, and they *must* be sold, gentlemen. I have no reserve whatever—pledge my honour. I have some of the scarcest goods in the market to offer, so be slippy, gentlemen, if you please.

"There are just two or three odd lots to clear off. First of

all, then, we will begin on Mr. Wrackem's stock. Now, Mr. Layton, what's the first lot, Sir? Pass it out, Dick, pass it out. Look alive! Now, then, gentlemen, favour me with a bid for this broken case of Jim Crow hats—at per dozen for them—no reserve—must be sold. Start me a bid for them. What shall I say? Half-a-crown a dozen? Very well—anything you like—must be sold.”

Mr. Topper then ran up, and very speedily knocked down, the Jim Crows and several other job lots, which were not part of the regular day's sale; but were offered merely as decoy-ducks, or rather as fuel for getting up the steam of the company to purchasing pressure. The unlucky owners of such goods would probably look dim at their account sales; for they were knocked down very cheap, and there was a good deal of scrambling eagerness evinced for them by a certain class of buyers, such as small shopkeepers, dealers, and hawkers; while the higher class of buyers—viz., warehousemen, large shopkeepers, country storekeepers, and traders to the South Sea Islands—turned their backs to the counter, as if to indicate their superiority, or contemptuous indifference to job lots in general; and there they stood in groups, discussing the current topics of the day, and making more noise than Mr. Topper and his hammer, and all his small buyers to boot. By the time the last of the odd lots was sold, the sale-room was crowded, and the auctioneer looked as happy and hopeful as a skipper with a fair wind.

“Now, gentlemen, we will go on with the sale of Mr. Wrackem's stock,” said Mr. Topper, again tapping the counter sharply, to draw the attention of some of his company, who were disposed to be rollicking. “I have an immense variety of things to get through, and they must be sold; for you are all aware that this is an imperative sale, by order of the trustees in the estate.” Then running his eyes over the invoices in his hand, he rapidly enumerated many very scarce articles, including heavy Scotch twills, 8/4 grey sheeting, blue guernseys, and scarlet blankets. The latter lines made the island traders and the storekeepers from the country slightly open their mouths in expectancy; for they had not been able to meet with those articles elsewhere in the city. The mention of two cases of coloured Lenos had a like fascinating effect upon a number of town drapers; and many undecided ones then resolved to await their chance of securing bargains, as was evidenced by their selecting seats on the cases or bales round the room; while a few of the more pushing sort, whose modesty seldom clogged their

progress anywhere, crept under the counter, and found more agreeable seats on the piles of soft goods behind the auctioneer.

"We will commence with the fancy goods, gentlemen: I hope to get through them this forenoon. Lunch at one o'clock, sharp; then we will go on with the Manchester goods and the choice slops. Now, then, Mr. Prague! a little less noise, if you please. We will hear all about your white-faced horse at lunch-time. What's the first lot, Mr. Layton? Pass it out, Dick. Ah! here is something in bonnets that you don't often see, gentlemen—rich and rare, I declare! from one of the first houses in Paris; beautiful! invoiced 12/3. Now, then, what shall I say for them? Favour me with a bid. For these ladies' trimmed bonnets, what shall I say? Anything you like, to start them; be slippy, gentlemen; start me a bid. Five shillings? Very well—it's a positive slaughter. Sixpence—thank you, Sir. Five and six—nine—five and nine! can't dwell! must be sold! Any advance on five and nine? Going at five and nine!" Tap went the little hammer, and Mr. Brede was declared the buyer.

"Pass them in, Tom! complete sacrifice! can't help it! must be sold! Now, the next lot; pass it out, Dick! Ah! these are far superior to the last—invoiced 14/6. Genuine invoice, pledge me honour. What shall I say for them, at per bonnet? Start me a bid? anything you like. Six shillings? Thank you, Sir! Splendid goods! Six shillings—six and six—seven—seven shillings—seven and threepence! Really, gentlemen, it is giving them away, but they must be sold. Any advance on seven and three? Are you all done? Going at seven and three!" The hammer again descended, and Mr. Griggs was the purchaser, who looked as pleased as though he had drawn a prize in a lottery; for he clearly saw cent. per cent. profit in perspective.

"Now, the next lot; look alive, Dick; pass it out," said the auctioneer, with a sigh, which was intended to signify sorrow at being forced to sell so awfully cheap. In that way Mr. Topper continued to put up and to knock down lot after lot with surprising rapidity, while his quick eyes glanced round his company in quest of nods or winks,—which were all the same to him,—and at the same time he noticed that none of his valuable customers deserted him. If at any time he observed a nervous movement on the part of the island traders, or the men from the country, who did not want to buy fancy goods, and were beginning to feel that they were wasting time by sitting there,

buying nothing, Mr. Topper would carelessly remark that lunch would be ready in twenty minutes; and if that pleasant announcement did not allay their impatience, he would adroitly glance towards the bottom of his invoice, and say, "We shall sell the scarlet blankets and the 8/4 greys directly;" when his fidgetty customers would resume their seats in a second with renewed hopes, like an angler who had just had a nibble.

Christopher felt amused, instructed, and amazed in turns, like a savage looking at a magic lantern. His admiration for the auctioneer was intense; while he could not but sympathize with his distressed feelings at being obliged to sell his goods so much below their cost. More than once, when Mr. Topper was struggling for an advance on some article invoiced at "twice as much," Christopher felt humanely inclined to make a bid, just to encourage him; but his musical clock chimed on his memory, and forbade him opening his mouth. Retreating into a corner, from whence he could see and hear all that was going on, Christopher took out his note-book, and from time to time entered therein little items of information which he gathered from the company on things in general; or the occasional emphatic remarks of Mr. Topper on the present scarcity and probable famine of certain drapery wares, technically called "bread-and-cheese goods," and of the absolute certainty of the articles that he was then selling being fearfully dear very soon. Christopher made many sage observations, too, on men and manners in Sydney, which he entered in another part of his note-book, under the heading of "Social and Sanitary Subjects," and which he intended to send home, to be "licked into shape," as he called it, and published, by his cousin Solomon.

Although the auctioneer and his active staff of clerks and porters were literally up to their eyes in business, it could not be so said of the whole of the company, many of whom seemed more inclined for fun than for fancy goods. Some of their jokes and smart sayings would have done credit to Mr. Waggle himself, or suggested new feats of legerdemain to Mr. Presto; and Christopher on several occasions laughed his hat off, despite his efforts to look grave. So long as their facetiæ did not materially interfere with the sale, Mr. Topper did not try to check it; for he wisely judged that it tended to keep his company awake, and saved him the trouble of resorting to expedients to arouse them. But when the jokes assumed an objectionable practical form, and were liable to damage the goods as well as the day's sale; for instance, when a frolicsome few began pelting

each other with merchandise, as they occasionally did ; or when some inveterate wag in the back ranks fitted a lady's cap on a bearded friend beside him ; or, in passing a sample box or parcel to the porter, knocked the hat of a good customer at the counter over his nose, Mr. Topper would look as severe as a school-master for an instant, and give some peremptory taps on the counter with his hammer, when order was restored at once ; for they all knew that Charley Topper was not the man to be trifled with when he was at his work, though at lunch-time they would find him as playful as an old pointer in a straw-yard.

Chief among the practical jokers was a little Israelite with large dark eyes, full of fun and shrewdness, and a good-looking, cheerful face, which a desponding man might have gazed upon with comfort. He was as full of capers as a kitten : but few persons could be angry with him, for his jokes were seldom of a mischievous character. He was not a large buyer ; indeed, Christopher did not see him buy anything ; yet he was almost as active as the auctioneer, and examined most things that were put up for sale, as though he meant to buy ; but he could seldom make up his mind until the lot was knocked down, when he tried to look sorry that he was again too late. If any trifling dispute arose between the vendor and the vendee, Mr. Phipps's voice was heard in an instant, arguing the case like a counsel ; but which side he espoused it was not easy to discover ; and though his voice was loud and solemn at such times, there was a waggish expression in his eyes, which proved that he was only making game of the disputants. When there was no higher scope for his exuberant fun, he would get behind a tall countryman, and tickle his ear with a straw, and chuckle to see the yokel ever and anon trying to scratch away what he supposed to be a troublesome mosquito. Christopher was highly amused with Mr. Phipps, and noted in his book that he was the funniest little Jew he had ever met with, not excepting Mr. Presto's comical little brother, Jingo.

At one o'clock lunch was clamorously demanded, when the sale was adjourned for an hour. Some of the company then ascended to Mr. Topper's dining-room upstairs, where a sumptuous cold collation awaited them ; while others stayed in the sale-room, and regaled themselves with bottled beer and bread and cheese, which was served out unsparingly.

Christopher was too modest to stay to luncheon without a special invitation ; and, as that ceremony was usually dispensed with, he strolled to the Royal Hotel.

After dining, and enjoying his customary *post-prandial* pipe,

he returned to the auction room, being anxious to gain a little further insight into the manners and customs of commercial men, which at times were as interesting to him as the antics of Punch and Judy. At two P.M. the sale recommenced; but the effects of the refreshment, both upstairs and down, were visible upon many of the assemblage; and it was some time before Mr. Topper could force up a satisfactory competition among his customers, or subdue the rampant spirit of fun and waggersy.

"Now, gentlemen, attention, if you please. I have a few bales of slops to offer,—to close an account; then I shall go on with the Manchester goods,—the blue guernseys, scarlet blankets, &c. Hand out the samples, Dick. Look alive! Now, then, start me a bid, gentlemen, for these very superior monkey jackets,—for one bale or more. Favour me with a bid to start them. Don't delay. Be slippy, gentlemen. I have many things to get through, and they must be sold. Now, then, what do you say? Start me a bid. Anything you like. Seven shillings. Very well. Eight—nine—ten—ten shillings—ten shillings—season will soon be in for them—ten shillings—ten shillings—beautiful goods—ten."

"Are you quite sure they are sound, Sir?" asked Mr. Phipps, pretending to be searching diligently for moths, or salt-water stains. "Halloa! here's a hole, Sir,—O, I see,—it's a button-hole, so it is; I beg pardon, yes, I think they are sound and fresh, Sir."

"Perfectly sound, Sir,—warrant them London made goods; invoiced 14s. 6d., pledge me honour. Ten shillings—eleven—twelve shillings. Thank you, Sir. Any advance? Going at twelve shillings. Are you all done? No advance." Down went the hammer, and Mr. Topper, with a searching glance at Christopher, said, "Will you favour me with your name, Sir?"

"My name is—a—a—Christopher Cockle, Sir," replied the youth, fumbling in his pocket for his card case, at the same time blushing up to his ears, in the consciousness that all eyes in the room were gazing on him with real or affected astonishment, while some of the gazers were audibly speculating upon what he was going to do with his purchases.

"How many bales will you take, Sir?" asked Mr. Topper, looking steadily at Christopher's face, but with a playful curl about his lips, which all his old customers fully understood.

"Bales, Sir! I don't want any at all," said Christopher timidly. "There must be some mistake, Sir; I had no idea of"—

"Did you not bid twelve shillings just now?"

"Yes, Sir, I heard him wink, as plainly as the one o'clock gun," said Mr. Phipps, which statement two or three of his colleagues instantly corroborated, and another one solemnly affirmed that he had seen the young gentleman nod, half an hour ago.

Christopher blushed and trembled, and assured them all upon his word and honour that they were in error; that he had no use for monkey jackets, and had never even dreamt of buying any.

A mock earnest discussion ensued among the joking gentlemen opposite to him, in which he heard his name ludicrously punned upon, and his pedigree investigated down to the old red sandstone. A noisy argument was also begun between Mr. Phipps and a fat man beside him, as to whether or not Christopher was a lineal descendant of the celebrated "high cockleorum jig;" while the poor fellow felt as miserably discomposed as if he were being tried for swindling.

In the mean time Mr. Topper was looking over some invoices with his clerk; but in a few minutes he remounted his rostrum, and said good-humouredly, "I suppose I must have made a mistake Mr. Cockle; so we will put the monkey jackets up again." Accordingly they were put up again, and after vainly trying to stimulate a higher bid, they were knocked down at nine and sixpence each, to a trader who could afford to keep them till the winter season arrived.

"There now, Mr. Cockle, you see what a shocking loss you have entailed upon the owner of those monkey skins," said Mr. Phipps, addressing Christopher with assumed gravity. "You should be very careful how you wink in places of this sort, or you may ruin yourself altogether, and upset our markets to boot. I can see you are a 'new chum,' Sir, so I give you my advice gratis. I once knew an innocent young Londoner, just arrived,—like yourself,—who was silly enough to sneeze in an auction room; and the salesman swore he said 'sixpence,' and knocked down a cargo of potatoes to him, at £4. 7s. 6d. a ton: and another chap—a Scotchman, lately imported from Dundee—who only just nodded good morning to a shipmate at a horse bazaar, over there, and he was immediately declared the buyer of a patent safety cab and a blind horse: so mind what you are about in future, Mister, for folks are as sharp as tailors' needles on this side of the line; and if they do look like fools, it is mainly the fault of their dress. Let me tell you, too, that

it is not a bit of good trying to bamboozle Mr. Topper; for though he seems so very modest, he is as 'cute as any lawyer in Elizabeth Street. He knows when a man bids better than a man knows himself sometimes, and it's no use saying he doesn't; for though he is a regular trump at other times, when he is mounted on that box, with his hammer in his hand, he has no more mercy on mankind, than old Anthropologicos, the cannibal chief. Why, bless your innocence! I have seen him knock down his big brother with that little hammer, many a time. Ah! you may stare, but it's a fact, Sir."

Christopher smiled faintly at the little man's *facetiæ*, but felt very ill at ease under his sudden popularity; and every tap of the ivory tool shocked his nerves like a blast from a stone quarry: so, lest he should be seized with a sudden sneezing fit, or give an involuntary nod, and bring down the dreaded hammer on his unlucky head again, he took a favourable opportunity for making his exit, and walked towards the flagstaff, revolving as he went the strange events of the day. He stopped ever and anon to put down a valuable thought in his note-book, or to make a rough sketch of some public building, in case his cousin Solomon should wish to illustrate his compilations.

As he strolled along, he became aware that he was attracting much attention from the populace. At first he felt flattered; for it struck him that he might be supposed to be sketching for the "Illustrated London News," or "Punch;" but by degrees he got fidgetty, then positively annoyed, for he could not reason away the fact that he was being laughed at, and he resolved that he would not again appear in public in white boots and linen tick trowsers. As he turned out of Prince Street, the children issued from the Model National School, and many of them stopped to gaze at him, as pleasantly as though he were a pantaloon in stage costume. He walked on in dignified silence; but was excessively vexed to find that he was followed by a score or more of rude boys, who jeeringly advised each other "to twig his tile."

Presently a little urchin, more bold than the rest, stepped forward, and, leering into Christopher's face, asked, with a roguish grin, "Who's your hatter?" Christopher, without an instant's reflection, raised his riding-whip, and gave the boy a smart cut across the loins, which made him cry, and made all the other boys laugh. Christopher felt a little comforted at having sent one of his tormentors home in misery; and he walked on, hoping that the other boys would soon go home too.

But he had not gone far before he heard an angry voice in his rear, and on looking round, he saw a bare-headed and bare-armed man, with a cobbler's apron on, running towards him, and violently demanding "why he had whipped his boy."

"Because he was insolent," said Christopher, turning round and boldly confronting the savage cobbler, who, with a volley of oaths and slang, said he would crack Christopher's "cobbera."

"He made game of me, Mr. Shoemaker," said Christopher excitedly, while he prepared to ward off the threatened blows.

"Sarves yer right! What do you make a guy of yourself for?" said the cobbler, aiming a straightforward blow at Christopher's nose. It fortunately missed the mark, but knocked his Chinese helmet off his head, when, to his horror, he saw in a moment the cause of the boy's curiosity about his hat-ter; for, fastened to a button on top of his helmet, was a draper's show ticket, inscribed in large red and green capitals, "Quite New."

Christopher tore off the vile ticket, then seized his helmet, and soon outran the cobbler and the crowd of hooting boys. Away he sped him like a greyhound, over the green behind the flagstaff, and, at the hazard of his neck, descended the rocks into Fort Street. A disengaged cab was passing at the time, so Christopher hailed it, and drove direct to the Royal Hotel, with his heart beating like the paddle of a patent churn.

CHAPTER XXIV.

CONTAINS an Account of Christopher's Boating Excursion down Sydney Harbour, with some new Acquaintances. Also, the ominous Growls of Fort Macquarie, and other interesting Subjects. The Danger of Drinking from running Streams.

WHEN Christopher got out of the cab at the doorway of the hotel, his mind was decidedly ruffled: so was his apparel. The cabman had very naturally concluded that his fare was a fugitive of some sort; so of course he charged a salvage rate, after the general fashion of making persons pay for their mishaps, or their inability to help themselves. Christopher paid the exorbitant demand, seeing that the stormy arguments of the driver were likely to gather a crowd, and produce a scene in the street.

He at once rushed to his bedroom and changed his clothes; then descended to the long room, and comforted himself with a bottle of beer. While doing so, the waiter brought him a letter, which he opened with much trepidation; for he feared it was either a bill for the monkey jackets, or a summons for an assault on the cobbler's boy. It was from his friend Slyver; and he felt cheered up a little while reading over the soft complimentary preamble; and his heart glowed with gratitude as he ejaculated, with tears in his eyes, "Ah! that's just like Slyver. So refined and gentleman-like, and so full of sympathy. I wish he were here now; I would get him to go back with me, and kick that impertinent shoemaker; and he would do it, too, I am sure; for he told me in confidence that he once smashed a man's nose with a soda-water bottle for calling Lord Gullikins a cheat on the Epsom race-course."

The letter explained that in consequence of the excessive sorrow of his friend Chizzleton, Slyver had been persuaded to remain at Bull's-Hide, Gunyah, another week; and that duty to his old "college chum" had alone induced him to forego the society of his equally respected "new chum" Cockle. He requested Christopher to forward by first post a bank-draft at sight for twenty-five pounds, to Mr. Chizzleton's brother Reuben,

addressed to the Post Office, Melbourne ; which he said was to put the poor fellow in decent mourning for his late sister-in-law. Mr. Slyver expressed his fears lest, in consequence of an annoying flood at the mines, his agent had not been punctual with his remittance, but added, " I will make it all right with you, old boy, when we meet."

Christopher felt a little chagrined at the prolonged absence of Mr. Slyver ; for he had previously written to his uncle, promising to pay him a visit as soon as his luggage was landed from the " Calabash ;" and as it had already been several days in the safe custody of his agent, he felt that he must make some explanation for his protracted delay. Accordingly, he sat down and wrote to his relative, briefly informing him that circumstances over which he had no control would prevent him leaving Sydney for a week or ten days : but after that he would certainly do himself the pleasure of paying his fondly anticipated visit, and he hoped to meet his dearly beloved uncle and aunt and his affectionate cousins " in good health, as he was at present."

By the time he had finished his letter, the tea-bell rang ; so he descended to the long room, and took his seat at the table with about forty other lodgers. Beside him sat the gentleman grazier from Bogie Plains, whose name was Hides. He had shown Christopher many little marks of attention, besides inviting him to his station ; and had given him sundry valuable hints calculated to enhance his safety and comfort in the bush. One of them was a specific for the bite of snakes, or other venomous reptiles, viz., ipecacuanha ; and another was an ingenious plan for warding off the bites of insects of less fatal nature, and which often haunt strange beds. The contrivance was simply two linen sheets sewn together in the form of a bag, with a string on the top, so arranged as to be easily drawn tight or loosened, at the pleasure of the person inside. Mr. Hides explained that he had got the hint from a young itinerant parson, who had tried it often with success. " Indeed," added Mr. Hides, with a smile, " my friend never knew it to fail to add to his comfort except on one occasion, when a rival parson, who had stopped one night at the same bush house of accommodation with him, had mischievously drawn the strings outside, and fastened them so that the poor young parson was kept in the bag all one forenoon, instead of preaching a charity sermon in a neighbouring township, according to announcement."

Christopher shrewdly suspected, from Mr. Hides' waggish looks, that he had got up that little incident extemporaneously ;

but he did not like to express his doubts of its authenticity : so he simply smiled, and said it reminded him of a funny little story, which he would relate. "He was once carrying a favourite Tom cat to his grandmother in a pillow-case, when a surly dog smelt the cat in the bag, and the cat smelt the dog, and scratched his way out of the bag, and awfully scratched him at the same time, then ran away into a china-shop ; and his grandmother had to pay he did not know how much for breakage, and lost the cat into the bargain, for the surly dog worried it to death." Mr. Hides smiled at Christopher's simple story, and said it was a shocking cat-astrophe, and should warn him not to let the cat out of the bag in future, or it might cost him more than it had cost his grandmother.

In the course of the meal, a discussion took place between Mr. Hides and two gentlemen who sat opposite, on the comparative merits of the various yachts which had run in the last anniversary regatta on the twenty-sixth of January ; and Christopher learned and noted that that day was regarded as the national holiday, and that boat-racing was the most popular sport of the Sydney public. After a good deal more conversation on boats and boating, the gentlemen opposite (who had recently come from the Turon gold fields) invited Mr. Hides and Christopher to accompany them on a boating trip down the harbour on the following day, which invitation they willingly accepted. Christopher was highly pleased at the prospect of seeing a little more of Port Jackson, the beauties of which had so charmed him at first sight ; and he thought he could very safely go afloat with gentlemen who evidently knew so much about boats and aquatic sports.

After he retired to bed that night, his mind was for some time active in scanning over the incidents of the day ; and he distinctly remembered that while little Mr. Phipps was giving his gratuitous advice on the danger of winking, there was a thin larky-looking draper close behind his (Christopher's) back ; and though he feigned to be intent on bidding for a lot of moleskin trousers, he was, without doubt, engaged in fastening the show-ticket to Christopher's helmet ; which was, to say the least, a very rude act, though far from an uncommon one in a Sydney auction room.

After breakfast next morning, Mr. Hides and Christopher, with Messrs. Pickett and Boxall, the two diggers, left the hotel, and went straightway to Wiley's, the poet-basketmaker's shop, and bought a pic-nic basket, which they soon filled with a

variety of victuals and drink. They then walked to Darling Harbour, where they engaged a half-decked, cutter-rigged boat, about five tons' burden; and a short time afterwards they were under sail, and bumping their way past the boats, and buoys, and shipping which thronged the eastern shores of Cockle Bay, as Darling Harbour is still called by some of the older boatmen. Away they went past Soldier's Point, narrowly escaping collision with the North Shore ferry steamer,—past Dawes' Point, and then the spacious harbour was before them, in all its dazzling beauty.

The wind blew in warm puffs from north-east, but the sky was clear, save a few cirrous clouds in the south-west horizon. The dancing wavelets sparkled in the sunshine like jewels, and the eyes of the excursionists glistened with enjoyment; for it was a rare treat to them all. To the grazier it was a cheering change from his late monotonous life in the far bush, with no other companions than his stock-men and his stock-dogs; for Mr. Hides was an old bachelor, though he confessed that he was pining himself grey for want of a wife. To the diggers, after six months' excitement and hard labour of burrowing under ground all day like moles, and huddling together in a tent at night like Gipsies, the recreation was both healthful and exhilarating. And although Christopher had not that keen zest for the holiday which is only to be realized by those who but occasionally enjoy a short respite from the toil and anxiety of daily duties, he nevertheless did enjoy himself; indeed, I think it almost impossible for any one—unless afflicted with hydrophobia—not to enjoy a cruise on a fine day upon the island-dotted bosom of Port Jackson.

Away they went across the mouth of Sydney Cove, where lay many lofty ships loading or discharging cargo at the Circular Quay. On the shrub-covered eminence, looking proudly down upon the city, was Government House with the union jack floating from the flag staff on the battlements. Couched below the viceregal residence, on a rocky point, was Fort Macquarie, looking like a mangy old watch-dog, cooling his toes in the sea. Of course they stopped a minute or two to lampoon the Fort, and grumble at its position, like a lot of mischievous street boys teasing a poor silly old cripple, when suddenly Mr. Hides began to laugh, as though some unseen hand were tickling his feet; and upon being questioned as to his mysterious mirth, he explained that one of his old friend Toadde's comical stories had just come into his head, and excited his risibility.

“Do you know Mr. Gabriel Toddle of Frog’s Flat?” asked Christopher, eagerly.

“Indeed, I do,” replied Mr. Hides with a chuckle; “I have known him many years; and well remember my introduction to him. I was on a visit at that time to a friend who had a farm on the bank of the Nimrod river. One sultry afternoon I was lying on a sofa, reading and resting, when I was suddenly disturbed by the dogs yelping in an unusual manner. Upon going outside to see what was the matter, I found that they had hunted a native bear into a tall gum tree, which grew in the middle of a field of maize. So I got an armful of straw, and stuffed into the hollow base of the tree, and put a fire-stick to it, when the smoke ascended the pipe of the trunk like a chimney. I then shut up the dogs, and got a small line with a noose in one end of it, and stood by for the bear to descend. Presently down he came, and I easily took him prisoner. But when I had caught him, I was like the old woman who won the elephant in a raffle, and did not know what to do with him. It was a full-grown koala, (or goriban, as the blacks would call it,) a little over two feet in length, with a thick furry coat of a dusky grey colour; and made a dismal sort of barking noise, like a dog with a sore throat. While I was cogitating whether to let my dozy-looking prisoner go, or kill him, and tan his hide, I saw a smart little boat skimming up the river under full sail and flying colours, with a smart-looking young fellow steering it, and that was Mr. Toddle. When he got within hail, I asked him if he would like to have a fine handsome bear?”

“‘I should indeed, Sir, very much,’ he replied briskly; and in two minutes he had clewed his sails up, and brought his boat alongside the jetty as cleverly as ‘the jolly young water-man’ in the old song could have done it.

“‘Will he bite, Sir?’ asked Mr. Toddle, looking rather dubiously at the big head and blunt muzzle of the bear. ‘He looks ugly enough to do anything wicked.’

“‘I am not certain about his biting, though he is of a graminivorous nature; but I am sure he can scratch,’ said I, showing the back of my right hand, upon which the goriban had left its mark.

“‘I’ll have him, Sir,’ said Mr. Toddle, seizing the line and dragging the unwilling brute to the jetty, then dropping him into the foresheets of the boat. ‘Lie down there,’ he added, nodding at his stupid-looking passenger. ‘I’ll make whisker

salve out of your grease, and send your stuffed carcase home to my old friend, Joe Longhead.'

"After politely thanking me for my present, Mr. Toddle pushed off from the jetty, loosed his sails, and away he sped before the fresh breeze, looking very proud of his pretty little boat. He had not gone a hundred yards, however, before the bear begun to crawl up the mast, being scared by the ripple of the water on the bows of the boat. At the same time I heard Mr. Toddle shouting to him to come down, which only scared him up higher, until his weight at the head of the taunt top-mast was more than the little boat could bear; for she gave two or three heavy rolls, and then rolled over altogether.

"To shorten the story," continued Mr. Hides, after a hearty laugh, "Mr. Toddle swam on shore again, without attempting to save his bear; and spent the night with me and my friends; and a merry night we had of it too."

"But what was that comical story that the old Fort reminded you of?" asked Christopher.

"Ah, that is too long to tell just now; but I will give it you by way of dessert, at dinner time."

Away went the jovial party across Farm Cove, with the Botanical Gardens adorning its semi-circular shores, and offering free recreation, combined with useful knowledge, to all well-conducted pedestrians. An incalculable boon to the citizens are those gardens, which are admirably kept by the scientific manager and his assistants. There is a luxurious retreat for weary-brained business men, from the heat and dust and whirl of the crowded streets. There is a delightful studio for the naturalist, or for those whose leisure will allow them to retire with a book into some secluded nook, and feast their minds, while they refresh their bodies with pure bracing air, fragrant with the odours of ten thousand flowers. There are arboreal solitudes, where tottering old folks may sit sheltered from fierce sun-beams or rude winds, and quietly ruminate over the rough journey of life which they have passed; and, aided by the beauties around them, may anticipate the "living green fields" and the "never-withering" flowers of Paradise, while they perhaps joyfully realize the sentiment of the old madrigal,—

"That their poor worn-out stuff, which is threadbare to-day,
May become everlasting to-morrow."

And there, too, is a charming play-ground for young folks,—

the future men and women of this embryo empire,—wherein they can frolic under the watchful eyes of their nurses, free from danger of being knocked down by busy men or runaway horses; and, important consideration too, without danger of their innocent young minds being contaminated by indecent sights and sounds, which are sadly prevalent in all large cities, not excepting the enlightened city of Sydney.

Onward glided the boat close under the stern of a frigate at anchor off Farm Cove, then across the mouth of Woolloomooloo Bay, with multitudes of houses sloping down from the heights of Darlinghurst to the oozy beach, which, by the by, is now reclaimed, and will soon be built upon, while the excellent semi-circular quay will probably attract a large trade with coasting vessels. Onward they went, passing Garden Island on their left hand; and then the many handsome mansions and villas on Pott's and Darling Points burst upon their view, with St. Mark's church and picturesque-looking parsonage modestly peeping from among the trees on the heights. They were strongly tempted to drop anchor in Rushcutters' Bay, and stop awhile to feast their eyes on the varied landscape around; but it was argued, and rightly so, that if they stopped to admire every beautiful spot, it would take them at least a fortnight to sail round Sydney Harbour; and as they were anxious to see as much of it as they could in one day, they kept on their course.

Fizz went the water at the bows of their boat, frothing up like pale ale, as Christopher facetiously remarked, and away they sped past Clark Island and Double Bay; speculating, of course, as every one does, on the cost of the many splendid mansions on the Point Piper estate, with their present yield in the shape of ground-rent, and the probable income of the yet unborn heir to the estate and title, when those ninety-nine years' leases shall terminate, and the numberless tenements revert to him. "My goodness! what a rich man he will be!" sighed Christopher to himself. "If I had as much money, I would buy the 'Calabash,' and go everywhere, and see everything."

Steering round those remarkable serrated rocks at the Point, they entered Rose Bay,—one of the loveliest bays in the harbour; its expansive milk-white beach at high tide strikingly resembling the dazzling coral beds of Polynesia. After sailing about that beautiful bay for some time, they hauled their wind, and passing to leeward of Shark Island, sailed over to Chowder Bay, and from thence past Middle Head, keeping at a safe distance from the heavy breakers that were dashing upon it; and across

the mouth of Middle Harbour to Manly Beach, which at that time had not grown to be what it is now, the Brighton of Sydney, and a very popular resort for invalids and holiday folks. Skirting Manly Beach, without going on shore, they sailed into Spring Cove, and landed at the quarantine station, which is a rural spot whose green shady bowers and sheltering rocks are dear to the recollection of many colonists, as the peaceful resting-place where they first set feet upon Australian soil, after many anxious and wearisome months on the ever-rolling ocean. That is the classic spot where many precious tears have fallen from the eyes of grateful immigrants in remembrance of past mercies from a kind protecting Providence; where many brave resolutions have been registered, and where many bright plans have been formed for their future advancement in this new land of theirs.

The excursionists sat for a short time beneath the refreshing shade of some overhanging vines, beside a little streamlet of pure cool water, which trickled among the ferns and over the moss-covered rocks from the hills above, and of which they drank unsparingly.

"There is no danger in drinking this water," remarked Mr. Hides; "for we can easily trace its source: but it is not expedient to drink water from every trickling stream in the harbour, as the following little story, which friend Toddle told me, will exemplify, and show the necessity for caution in drinking even cold water, or you may unconsciously be swallowing the leaven of colic or cholera morbus.

"Two friends, after enjoying an exhilarating sail down this harbour, one warm day, with a strong sea breeze, landed from their boat in Rose Bay, and seated themselves beneath the shadow of a rock, near a little rill of water, which flowed with a very poetical, gurgling sound through the long grass and wild flowers, and over some green, slimy stones, into a sort of natural basin below. One of the friends, whose heart always leaped at the sight of anything rural, began to make an impromptu poem on the tiny waterfall; while his matter-of-fact comrade spread out their dinner, consisting of cold sausages and currant dumplings, upon a tabular rock near at hand. After their homely meal, which was as enjoyable as a municipal banquet, they drank from the rill, out of a cocoa-nut shell which they found on the sea-shore. In doing so, they each remarked that their beverage was not particularly clear, and that it had rather a physicky flavour; still it was so deliciously cool, and the wild flowers looked

so innocent, that they drank heartily, and were thankful. A short time afterwards, while one of the friends was stretched on his back, puffing his after dinner pipe, the other (who abjured tobacco in all its forms) climbed the rocks above in search of botanical specimens and rare spiders, unconscious at the time that he was trespassing on the domains of one of the merchant princes of Sydney. Presently he returned to his smoking companion, (with his mouth as expressive of disgust as if he had just sucked a bad egg,) and informed him that he had traced the romantic little rill from which they had drunk so heartily, up to the outhouses of a mansion on the eminence just above them, and the discovery had immediately induced symptoms akin to an overdose of ipecacuanha."

After that story had been laughed at, and shrugged at, and commented upon, Mr. Hides told some startling stories of his encounters with snakes in similarly secluded nooks to the one they were sitting in, until they all began to feel fidgetty; and one of the diggers thought he felt something creeping in his left boot; whereupon they arose, and retraced their steps towards the open shed near the beach, where they had left their basket. On the way thither they inspected many rudely chiselled inscriptions on the rocks, chronicling the dates of arrival of certain ships, with the names of the captains and doctors, and number of emigrants; and showing at the same time the acknowledged penchant which Britons have for blazoning their way through the world.

Christopher had squeezed his name into the mass of autographs in Napoleon's old house at St. Helena, and in every other place where he thought there was the smallest probability of human eyes beholding it; so, of course, he wrote his name on the rocks in Quarantine Cove; and there it is to be seen to this day, by any curious person who chooses to go there and look till he finds it.

The contents of the pic-nic basket were then spread out upon the green sward; and while they partook of the *al fresco* meal, they were kept merry by the flashes of fun from the diggers, and the dry drollery of Mr. Hides. Christopher ever and anon produced, as impromptu, some of the faded wit of Mr. Waggle; but though he added grimace enough to make it laughable, it was as insipid as tripe without trimmings.

"Now, Mr. Hides, let us have friend Toddle's story about Fort What's-his-name, that we were laughing at this morning,"

said Christopher, speaking with his mouth full of water-melon. "You promised it with our dessert."

"Ay, lots of ninnies as well as ourselves have laughed at the old Fort," said Mr. Hides; "but if folks would think and act, instead of indulging in jokes or useless grumbling on the subject, the fort, or rather, the guns in the fort, would soon be mounted in a position where they might be of real service to us, in the event of a hostile fleet attempting to enter our port."

After a few introductory remarks Mr. Hides then began the following story.

CHAPTER XXV.

MR. FINNYMAN'S fishing Experience. Outside Sydney Heads, and in Sydney Harbour, or warning Growls from Fort Macquarie.

MR. FINNYMAN was very fond of fishing : indeed it had been a passion with him, since the merry time when he first caught tadpoles and tittlebats—with a crooked pin—in the Hackney ditches ; and caught the rod on his return to his maternal home, for bedaubing his pinafore with green slime. Never will he forget the triumphant day, when he hooked a two-pound pike from the river Lea ; and sunny memories of his favourite seat under the drooping willow, with a can full of lively perch and gudgeon beside him, often refresh him when hunting the silver fish out of the woollen wares on the shelves of his shop in George Street, Sydney. But he has a more vivid recollection of his awful forebodings of becoming food for sharks, when he accompanied an enthusiastic party of young Australians, in a small boat outside Sydney Heads, for a day's schnapper fishing : and the bare idea of that pleasure trip makes him shudder to this day.

" Catch me going to sea in a cockle-shell again ! " he remarked to his wife, when he returned home on that memorable evening, smelling like a fishmonger's barrow, and with his sunburnt face as gloomy as a bronze knocker on a gaol door. " Such a day's tossing as I have endured, would have rocked all the romance out of Izaak Walton himself. I'll engage he never went schnapper fishing in a skiff."

The day had been remarkably warm ; a fresh north-east wind had ruffled the sea, and kept the fishers moist with spray ; and the little boat danced about on the topping billows to such an extent, as not merely to scare away all Mr. Finnyman's enjoyment, and his energy to handle his line, but to fill him with absolute dread of being drowned. The fish were plentiful, and took the bait freely ; but he might as well have been in his shop selling slops, for all that he added to the piscatory freight. Vainly did he implore his jovial companions to up kellick, and land him on the nearest point, for pity sake : the amphibious young natives only laughed at his fears, and recommended

brandy and sausage rolls for his sea sickness ; the very mention of which increased his malady. Finding that neither persuasions nor threatening would prevail over his practised friends, who were enjoying the sport amazingly, and had no desire to lose time by rowing into the harbour to land him, he tied a handkerchief over his ears, and sank groaning into the bottom of the boat, upon the slimy schnappers and flatheads ; and he did not dare to lift his head up again, until the boat bumped against the wharf in Watson's Bay, an hour after sunset, when he felt as cold and stiff as a dead jew-fish.

"Catch me in a fishing-boat outside the Heads again, if you can, my dear," said Mr. Finnyman to his good wife, as she tucked him into bed that night, and anointed his blistered nose with cold cream. Mrs. Finnyman smiled at her husband's knowing look, as he said so ; and replied, that she would not promise to *try* to catch him outside the Heads, because she never ventured into a boat, even inside the harbour : but the sly little puss knew very well that it was only his witty way of assuring her that he would never do so any more ; so she kissed him, and said that she felt implicit confidence in his word, in that particular case ; and added encouragingly, "Lie still, and go to sleep, dear ; you will be better to-morrow."

Mr. Finnyman was faithful to his promise. He never went schnapper fishing afterwards ; but he often took his bream lines, and enjoyed half a day's quiet sport off the rocks in Woolloomooloo Bay ; and a very nice place it is too, for any one who can appreciate fresh sea air and retirement, and has patience to wait till the fish smell his bait ; for the funny tribe are not so abundant there as in the other parts of the harbour.

One summer afternoon, Mr. Finnyman's friend Blocks, the hatter, returned home with a large basket full of fat little bream, which he had caught at the end of the new pier or embankment near Fort Macquarie ; and knowing the passion of his friend Finnyman for angling, he told him the place where he had met with such unprecedented success ; and gave him half a dozen "yellow-tails," all alive, for bait : so Mr. Finnyman resolved to try his lines at the same prolific spot. Accordingly, next morning, after breakfast, away he trudged with his tackle and bait, and his basket, containing a bottle of cognac, and some cold mutton pies, the morning's paper, and his pipe. It was ebb tide when he reached the fishing ground, which Blocks had told him was the best time for catching fish at that spot ; so he baited

his hooks, and sat down upon a stone, with a line in each hand, and his heart full of anticipation. The sun was unobscured, and the wind was warm and puffy; so Mr. Finnyman hoisted his umbrella, and put on his green goggles to protect his eyes, while he stared into the dazzling water for symptoms of bites. But the fish were shy or dainty that morning, and only nibbled away the bait, which, though rather tantalizing, did not upset his patience; and he muttered jocosely, "I'll hook some of you by and by, my boys; and let you wag your tails in my basket."

Presently he became conscious of a remarkable fume, which reminded him of the cat-gut factory at Bow, where he used to get groundbait and "gentles" for gudgeon fishing; and his penetrating nose soon discovered that the scent issued from the *embouchure* of the main city sewer; which, by a nice engineering arrangement, is made to disgorge its odorous fluid into the open mouth of the Cove on either side, alternating its favours with the turn of the tide; while the wind distributes the mephitic vapours with the same impartiality, though with characteristic fitfulness.

"Poo-oh! Foo-oh! What a suffocating smell! Sulphuretted hydrogen, I think," ejaculated Mr. Finnyman, at the same time sniffing vigorously,—as people usually do in such cases, as if to satisfy some doubt about it. "Ugh! it's a regular stench, I declare! Cholera morbus and typhus fever by wholesale," he added, after a moment's reflection. "It's enough to knock down the battery behind me, and turn Government House black in the face. I am not surprised that there are plenty of fish about this spot, but I cannot think they are wholesome food; at all events, it is positively dangerous to sit here and catch them; for I am very likely to catch putrid fever at the same time, or carry it home in my clothes for my children to catch. I wonder the public has not been warned of the deadly influence of this malaria." He then began to wind up his lines, preparatory to starting for his old quarters in Woolloomooloo Bay; but suddenly he seemed seized with a second thought, suggestive of rest, and a comforting smoke of his pipe; for he made fast his lines to a stone, then, taking his basket, he walked over to the Fort, and seating himself on the shady side of it, took a long sip from his bottle, lighted his meerschaum, and began to read the report of the previous night's debate in "the House," which was on the subject of "Harbour defences."

As is sadly too often the case in the House of Assembly, there was much apparently factious opposition to the motion in debate; while something like a warlike feeling was displayed by one or two of the members; and after a prolonged discussion the House was adjourned, with the business of the day—or rather of the night—in about the same state as when the House met.

As Mr. Finnyman read through speech after speech of the honourable members, he occasionally testified his approval or otherwise by a significant nod, or a sharp ejaculatory expression of impatience; now and then soothing his rising wrath with a sip from the bottle beside him, until he got so engrossed in the important subject, that his chin dropped upon his chest, and he was lost in profound reverie. Presently he heard a very gruff voice just above him, which sounded like a thirsty elephant blowing through the bung-hole of a water-butt; and he fancied his name was called very distinctly.

“Halloa! who are you?” asked Mr. Finnyman, at the same time naturally feeling rather nervous at such an unusual noise.

“Don’t be frightened, Sir; I’m not going to fire at you,” said the voice. “I am Fort Macquarie; named after the good old governor who built St. James’s Church yonder. I overheard some of your remarks, as you read that newspaper in your hand; so I have opened my porthole to say, ‘Hear, hear!’ and I only wish I could rouse up, with a broadside, some of those persons whom you justly censure for neglecting their duty, and leaving this fine capital to the mercy of any foe who chooses to molest it. But I hope you don’t think it is my fault, Sir, if I am out of my proper place in these warlike times; for I shout to the citizens every day at one o’clock precisely, to remind them of my position, though few persons heed my warning voice, except nervous old ladies, hungry workmen, sea-captains, and watchmakers. Although I have been cruelly sneered at by scores of gentlemen with blue coats and cocked hats,—including Commodore Wilkes and his staff,—and called a popgun, and other scurrilous names, by a host of silly fellows, whose *forte* it is to gabble and scribble about things they don’t understand, I have some metal in me, which you will see, if you step up, and ask the soldier on guard to let you look at my inside. It is unbecoming British batteries to boast,—still, we are always expected to express decided opinions; and I will say, whatever my detractors may say in reply, that if a hostile fleet were to show their figure-heads round Bradley’s Head yonder, I would

do my best to knock their heads off; and, with the aid of my brother Kirribilli opposite, Sir William Denison in the middle, Lady Macquarie on my right, and my old friend Dawes on the hill to the left, we should soon make the enemy glad to up helm or down helm, whichever he liked, and get under cover.*

"But I am only a sandstone battery, and rather soft sandstone too, as some of my weather-worn joints evidence; and I have far from an exalted opinion of myself now, whatever I might have had thirty years ago; still, I think my colonial experience ought not to be grinned at. But in these days of iron-clads, and all that sort of thing, Sir, if an old-fashioned fort like myself presumes to offer an opinion, he is sure to provoke a cynical joke; especially in Sydney, where so many of the folks are facetiously bold when there is no danger actually in sight, and where there are lots of foolhardy or sleepy-headed chaps, who never look farther from their own noses than a blind bull does; and who sneer at our brave volunteers, which vexes me more than enough. Nevertheless, I have modestly warned the public, over and over again, and I have hinted to them, as plainly as I can speak, what they will probably have to pay for their culpable apathy one of these days; but some of them toss their heads proudly, and talk about old England's fine navy, and their right to British protection; while others merely scowl, and say, 'Pooh! pooh! no fear!' which is real colonial boys' logic, as you are aware, Sir; for I perceive you are not deaf.

"The other day, I noticed some noisy youngsters picking up empty bottles, that were bobbing about in the water against my toes. By and by the boys began to quarrel over an old pickle jar; and I overheard one great lout of a fellow defy the others—who threatened to thrash him—by poking his tongue out, and saying in a taunting tone, and in colonial slang, 'Ah, my word, you had better not hit me, or my mother will be down on you like great guns.' That reminded me directly of some of the bigger boys of Sydney, whom I have just alluded to: they look for protection from old England's great guns, instead of manfully putting themselves in a posture of self-defence; or, at all events, of doing what they can, before they cry out, 'Mother!' How can our dear old parent protect all her large family, if they won't do anything to help themselves? Pooh! it's cowardly to expect such a thing; and she would naturally say to us, if the trial came, 'Don't you wish you may get it?'

* Kirribilli Fort, Fort Denison, Lady Macquarie, and Dawes Batteries.

“But please to sit still, Sir; I have a few minutes to spare before dinner-time, and I will give you a little bit more of my mind; for I know you are a sensible man, from the remarks I heard you make on the madness of leaving this rich city so exposed to hostile attacks. I said just now, that if an enemy were to enter our harbour, I and my brother Forts would do our best to keep him away from Sydney Cove. I say that again, and I can't say more; but it almost makes me savage enough to blow up my own magazine, when I put the question, ‘Why should we let an enemy quietly enter the harbour without making the least attempt to stop him? Why should we give him the advantage of smooth water, and the shelter of some of those nice little islands, while he sent his boats ashore for all the bullion in the banks, and broke hundreds of hearts at the same time; or shelled the city into ruins, and made targets of all those palatial homesteads on the hills around?’ It is ten times worse than absurd, and I don't care who hears me say so; in fact, I would blow that sentiment right into the House of Assembly, if it were not for hurting the feelings of some of my true friends there. They may call me a sandy-headed old croaker, who choose to do so; but that won't prove that my remarks are not sound and honest. Now, Sir,—I wish to speak modestly of myself,—but suppose I were to be moved to the South Head, and brother Kirribilli opposite were wheeled round to the North Head, and Lady Macquarie were carried over in her chair to Middle Head, don't you think we could show our metal to more advantage? Certainly we could, Sir; especially if our government would ask Mr. Armstrong to take all our old guns in exchange for a few new ones, and ask the Admiralty at home to give us an old ship, which we could make into an iron-clad, and keep moored near the ‘Sow and Pigs’ reef.

“I don't presume to say that the plan I propose would be the best one for fortifying the harbour; for I am not an engineer, you see, Sir; but I mean to say this, that our guns would be of more service in the position I have named, than where they are at present. And I say, too, that it is the bounden duty of the rulers of the land to set to work unitedly, and without delay, to concoct some sensible plan for defending their capital; and, at the same time, it is the duty of the colonists in general to help their rulers all they can, and not merely to sit down and grumble at them; for that will do no good, and it is not courteous to do so. I wish this additional warning of mine may rouse some of the sleepy ones to their duty, though

I am afraid they'll only grin at it ; but if they don't soon bestir themselves, one of these fine days they will have their houses knocked about their ears ; and then I wonder if they will ' Pooh ! pooh ; no fear ! ' ”

“ Bang ! ” went a big gun, from the centre port of the battery at that instant, which made Mr. Finnyman jump, as though an enemy were in sight. He rubbed his eyes and looked down the harbour, but could not see any ironclads ; then he looked towards the city, and saw crowds of persons hurrying along twice as joyfully as if they were going to church ; so he at once concluded that the shot he had just heard was not a warlike one, but a friendly reminder that it was dinner-time. In the happy belief that there was no immediate danger of being shot at, Mr. Finnyman followed the example of the colonists in general, and dismissed for the present the controversial subject of “ Harbour defences,” for one of more individual importance, and forthwith began to fortify his inner man with mutton pies and pale brandy.....

As he trudged homeward in the evening, with a basket of fish under his arm, which he had caught in Woolloomooloo Bay, his mind was pondering over the remarkable event of the day, and wondering whether the old Fort had actually talked to him, or if he had been dosing and dreaming. Whichever way it was, however, it had certainly aroused him to a sense of the importance of a subject which he had not previously thought upon very seriously ; and he began to feel fidgetty for the safety of his houses at the North Shore, and his stock-in-trade in Sydney ; while various selfish schemes or expediciencies—commonly called “ looking out for number one ”—crowded upon his mind. First of all, he resolved to turn all his property into sovereigns, then go into the bush, and bury them all in his back-yard ; but the dread of bushrangers and domestic thieves put that plan to flight before he had turned it over in his head twice. Then he thought of investing in sheep, or cattle, or land in the country, far beyond the range of Armstrong guns, or hostile foraging parties ; but he reflected again, that in the event of the city being laid under contribution, the whole colony would be taxed to make up the loss, which was a little circumstance he had previously lost sight of. After thinking of a variety of other plans, he could not see any feasible way of escaping the general distress which a foreign invasion would cause ; so he finally resolved to stand his ground, and, if necessary, to fight like a Briton for his family, his fortune, and his adopted country ; and

he further resolved to set steadily to work at once to wake up his drowsy neighbours ; and to use his influence, so far as it extended, to get everything done, that reasonably could be done, for the defence of the city.

If Mr. Finnyman's rational determination were adopted by the citizens and colonists in general, the important work would soon be accomplished ; and the defenceless state of the harbour would no longer be a subject for envious visitors to joke about, or our golden city an inviting prey for a future foe.

After the foregoing story had been briefly commented upon by the merry party, they gathered up the fragments of their feast into the picnic basket, then re-embarked, and set sail.

CHAPTER XXVI.

CONTAINS a further Account of the Sayings and Doings of the jovial Boating Party. The Song of the Squatter. Mr. Hides's Story of the great Ghost that was caught in Sydney.

LEAVING Spring Cove, the excursionists crossed the Heads, (or entrance to Port Jackson,) when the heavy swell of the ocean made the little boat roll about, to the discomposure of them all. Christopher turned pale with fear; while the diggers grew gold colour with bile, and gave direct evidences that they were seasick. Mr. Hides looked wistfully at the land, and confessed that he did not care for boating in a sea way, and would rather be crossing Bogie Plains on a buckjumping horse, or riding in a bullock dray over a corduroy road. Still he was cheerful, and even jocular; for, as he said, "it was no use coming out for a day's pleasure, and to be miserable as mutes at a dead man's door." His efforts to make his squeamish friends see the Druid's face in the bold outline of the North Head were fruitless; not one of them had imagination enough to discern anything but a huge rocky headland, three hundred feet high, without a face at all.

In a short time the boat glided under shelter of the South reef, and soon afterwards entered Watson's Bay; when there was a visible improvement in the whole party, and they began to look as brave as boys on a merry-go-round. They landed at the jetty, then ascended to the summit of the cliffs, and peered nervously from those stupendous heights upon the surging waves at their base, or glanced seaward at a ship which was steering for the port. In returning, they stood for a short time, and gazed into the Gap,—that fatal chasm, subsequently made so sadly memorable by the wreck of the London ship "Dunbar," which mistook the gap for the entrance to the harbour one dark stormy night, and was dashed to pieces on those formidable rocks, and all her passengers and crew perished, with the exception of one man, who was miraculously washed upon a narrow ledge in the cliffs. There are many persons this day whose hearts swell at the mention of that dire catastrophe; and tears of sorrow still

fall from the eyes of bereaved relatives in this land and elsewhere, at the mournful recollections of those helpless sufferers on that awful night of death.

After taking a hasty look at the lighthouse, they retraced their way to the jetty, re-embarked, and sailed into Vaclaue Bay, where they again landed, and feasted upon the oysters that cover the rocks in almost every part of the harbour; but which are especially abundant in Vaclaue. Christopher was astounded at the prodigious clusters of shell fish; to be had for nothing, too, or for the mere trouble of knocking them off their sandstone beds. As he plentifully helped himself to the fat little natives, he wished his father could only see those wonderfully prolific rocks; how delighted he would be, to be sure! and how amused Sophy would be to see those myriads of little blue-backed crabs, crawling in and out of the holes in the sandy beach at low water! Then he tried to estimate the value of those oyster and crab colonies if they were only in the neighbourhood of Billingsgate Market; and engaged in other calculations equally practical, until he unluckily cut his thumb with an oyster shell, and soon afterward scooped a little bit of mud into his eye while trying to catch a crab. He then decided that he had had enough shell fish; so he returned to the boat, and quietly jotted down in his diary the remarkable sights of the day, not omitting the old tree, which other pseudo-naturalists have commented upon,—a straggling root of which extended to low water mark, and was covered with tenacious little oysters, similar to those which grew on the rocks.

In a short time the rest of the party re-embarked, and being of unanimous opinion that brandy was the best thing in the world to keep oysters from disagreeing, they opened a fresh bottle, and by the time they had emptied it, their brains began to swim, and their eyes to see "two apiece." Mr. Pickett then declared that "double or quits" was his motto, and forthwith uncorked another bottle; but before they had dipped very deeply into it, the sun had dipped behind the Blue Mountain range, which warned the bacchanalians to prepare to depart. Whereupon Mr. Boxall stammeringly remarked "that it was time for them to up stick and be off; for Sydney Harbour was not a comfortable place to sail in after dark, on account of the numerous steamers plying about." He then told a little incident of a merry home-ward-bound picnic party being chopped up one night by the starboard paddlewheel of an ocean steamer.

The effect of that story was to make them all very active in

getting under way, and Mr. Hides proposed to pull home close to the shore, as the wind was contrary and very fitful; but Mr. Boxall declared, with a sailor's oath, that they might as well try to pull the "Bottle and Glass rocks" to Sydney, as to pull that heavy boat against a head wind; that to attempt it would only be to break their own backs, and fracture the boat's sculls. "Sit down, my hearties," he added, as he took the helm. "Coil yourselves up, and make your minds easy, and I'll work the boat up to the market wharf as cleverly as Captain Cook, the harbour master, could do it. Cockle, you sit forward, and look after the jib sheets, but don't touch them till I give the word of command. Hides, please to catch hold of the main sheet, and mind you don't fancy you are on a kicking colt, and haul in the rope instead of letting it go. If the boat begins to lurch too much, Pickett, you mind the provision basket, and see that the bottles don't fall out, and spill the brandy; for it is more than half drunk, like ourselves. Now then, haul aft the main sheet. Off she goes!"

Away they went, on the port tack, and were almost within the rollers on the "Sow and Pigs Reef," before they saw the danger.

"'Bout ship!" roared Boxall. "Helm's a-lee! Look alive with your jib sheets, Cockle! Let draw! All right. That's close shaving, Hides," he added—looking round at the curling breakers—with quivering lips; whereupon Mr. Hides coolly stroked his beard, and said, he did not like close shaving, either on sea or on shore.

The boat gathered way on the opposite tack, and glided slowly along, heading for Shark Island, with the wind still warm and puffy from the north-west. As some of the party were evidently disposed to be dozy, Mr. Boxall, by way of rousing them up, loudly called for a song or a yarn from some one; when Christopher, thinking it a good opportunity for trying if Mr. Welp's wit would pass current in the colony, told a little story of Chabert the celebrated "fire king," who used to bathe in boiling oil, and dance on red hot bricks without boots; and who, it is said, generally took his own Sunday's dinner to the bakehouse, and got into the oven with it while it was cooking, in order to guard against the baker's stealing his gravy, or changing his big baked potatoes for little ones:—how, on one occasion, when Mr. Chabert was on board a steamer, the furnace fires would not draw nicely, and he crawled round the flues, to see what was wrong with them.

The point of the wit in that extraordinary story was the assumption that only such salamanders as Mr. Chabert could bear the

hot winds of Sydney without melting away like mutton tallow. The story did not take well; but whether because Christopher was too drunk to bring out its salient points, or because the company were too sober to favour such a gross absurdity, is not certain. Mr. Pickett observed, that—"hic—it was a pretty fair specimen of the bad stories which certain society tolerated; and—hic—perhaps it was true enough, as the times go in Sydney; but he would advise his young friend—hic—not to take that nonsense up to the town, or he would be sent home—hic—with his head in a tin billy." He further advised Christopher, with tipsy solemnity, to "try if any disciple of Hahnemann, or any other man in Sydney, could supply him with a little mother tincture of gumption, for special use, before he again went into the company of—hic—gentlemen."

Christopher blushed double crimson, and retorted upon Mr. Pickett in a style which would have speedily led to a fight, had not Mr Hides adroitly diverted the affray by asking Christopher if he believed in ghosts.

"Well—um—hic—not exactly, Sir," said Christopher, rather startled by the strange question. "That—is to say—hic—I have never seen one myself; though they certainly are in the Cockle family; for uncle Peter saw aunt Rachel's ghost when he was going home from the Odd Fellows' Hall, across Peckham Rye, one night—hic—and it frightened him into a fit. Father said it was only old Spudd the greengrocer's white donkey; but uncle was so savage at the insinuation that he could not tell a ghost from a jackass, that—hic—he did not speak to father for five months afterwards. Have you ever seen a ghost, Mr. Hides?"

"I have, indeed," said Mr. Hides, with a very serious look, "and a tremendous great ghost it was, too."

"I should like to hear all about it—hic;—for I was always very partial to ghost stories."

"Well, I will tell it; and I can vouch for the facts," said Mr. Hides. "In a certain part of Sydney, not long ago, stood a dilapidated house, which had formerly been occupied by a respectable family; but at the time of the occurrence I am about to tell you of, it was untenanted. For several nights the people in the neighbourhood were disturbed by strange noises in the dilapidated house, which they could not ascribe to any but preternatural causes; and no one was bold enough to undertake a personal investigation. The noises usually began at about eight o'clock in the evening, and were continued until the more ghostly hour of midnight, when they usually subsided.

“Rumour, of course, soon carried the ghost, or, rather, his fame, all over the city; and crowds of persons were attracted to the front of the house every evening, insomuch that the thoroughfare was seriously impeded. For more than a week the nightly excitement was kept up, and the morning papers contained reports of the freaks of his ghostship, who soon grew as popular in the city, as Jacobs, the great wizard, is at the present time.”

“As everybody went to see the rare sight of a real lively ghost, I, of course, went too, and an awful crushing I got in the crowd; but I felt amply compensated by a frequent sight of the phantom, first at an upper window, then at a lower one; while the staring folks around shouted with delirious excitement, ‘There he is! There he goes! Here he is again!’ as the gigantic white figure flashed into the light of a window, or flitted into the darkness behind. After stopping an hour or two, and seeing no variation of the scene, except a blueish glare now and then, like the lighting of lucifer matches, I naturally began to grow weary; for even ghosts become tame things to look at after a time. So I went into an adjacent tavern for some refreshment, and there I found the landlord and several auxiliary tapsters very busy dispensing spirits of another sort to a horde of craving customers, and seeming as careless about gazing at the peripatetic goblin in the old house opposite, as the owner of a peep-show is to peer through the bull’s eye at his own slides.

“The next night I went again, and found the throng greater than ever, and the excitement intense. Some of the ‘cabbage-tree boys’ were there too, indulging in their favourite holiday rollick of knocking all the ‘black billies’ from the heads of the wearers; not so much on account of their over zeal for an important branch of colonial industry, or from any particular grudge they bore to English hatters, as to gratify their innate love of mischief. Many an unlucky *Mountcastle* was demolished that night, and many sound noses got damaged while their owners were saving the said unpopular black hats from being kicked halfway to Paramatta.

“About ten o’clock the ghost was in tip-top spirits, and glided from window to window with thrilling rapidity, while the excitement of the crowd was intense. Presently, loud shouting and jingling of fetters, of some kind, were heard in the house, and flashings of bull’s-eye lanthorns were seen.

“‘Hallo, there are two ghosts! three! four! They are having a regular pitched battle!’ were hasty exclamations from various bystanders.

“ ‘I see six ghosts with blue capes and shiny hats!’ shouted a boy from his perch on the top of a lamp post.

“ ‘Ah, them’s blue devils, I’ll bet tuppence,’ growled an old stockman, with a carbuncled nose, who stood at my elbow. ‘I know them customers; for I have had my hut full of ’em after a week’s spree on bad rum. They are ten times worse nor ghosts, cos they’re always coaxing a man to cut his throat, or hang himself. Ugh! I hate them worse than brown snakes or deaf adders.’

“ Suddenly the front door opened, and out rushed a posse of policemen, dragging the ghost with them; and a very strong ghost it was too, and an awful fellow to curse and swear, as I could plainly hear.”

“ ‘Goodness me!—hic—did they actually catch him?’” asked Christopher, with astonishment.

“ Catch him! yes, as safe as a trapped dingo. And he caught it too,—as the saying is; for he was sentenced the next morning to cells and hominy in Darlinghurst gaol for a month.”

“ Ah, come now, that’s too rich,—hic—can’t swallow that, Sir, as Mr. Waggle said of the curried porpoise. Ghost eat hominy! O!—hic—you may as well tell me a bony skeleton could blow a bugle—hic—I can’t take in that story at all, Sir.”

“ I may as well tell you the sequel to the story at once,” said Mr. Hides, smiling at the puzzled looks of his auditory. “ The ghost was some drunken sailor,—dressed in white calico,—who had been hired at a certain sum per night by the publican opposite; evidently for the purpose of attracting a thirsty crowd near his house; and the *ruse* had doubtless paid him well.

After the merits of the story had been freely discussed, it was decided by Mr. Pickett that, according to Turon etiquette, Mr. Hides was entitled to call upon any of the company for a song; whereupon he called upon Christopher, who made a few hiccoughing apologies, then shut his eyes, and sang the comic song that he had learned from Little Jingo, which was so boisterously approved of, that Christopher felt quite pleased at his success as a singer, until he began to feel sorry that he had not improved his time more, and learned another popular song or two, when he had the opportunity of doing so: for his old stock of sentimental ditties would not take in Sydney.

Messrs. Boxall and Pickett having claimed exemption from the call to sing, by virtue of their offices of steersman and bottle-

holder, Christopher called upon Mr. Hides for a song, who vowed that he did not know a single stave, until Boxall declared that, according to ancient and modern custom, he must either sing a song, or drink a pint of sea water with the chill off. The brandy bottle was then passed round again, and under its immediate inspiration Mr. Hides's latent vocal powers were aroused to concert pitch. After the little preliminary cough—which most amateur singers are troubled with—was better, he remarked apologetically, “that he was an old cock, with a very wiry crow; still he would do his best to promote general harmony. His song ought—strictly speaking—to be sung by a sheep-owner; but he quite endorsed the sentiments of it; and as he intended to turn his attention to ovine interests as soon as he had sold his cattle-station, it was not out of place for him to sing it.” He then coughed again, and began the following original pastoral in a wheezy voice, which struggled through his bushy beard like the groaning of a rusty pump in a dry well.

SONG OF THE AUSTRALIAN SQUATTER.

Air, “Rory O’More.”

WHILE senators make the Macquarie Street halls
 Resound with their eloquence shallow or deep,
 O'erjoy'd to escape from political thralls
 In peace I'll stay home, and look after my sheep.

While solemn *savans* of the bench and the bar,
 In black bombazine and white poodle-skin wigs,
 With helpers more snappish than dingoes by far,
 Are meting out justice to squabblers and “prigs;”

While bankers and merchants and brokers and scribes,
 (A multitude more than five frigates could hold,)
 With brewers, distillers, and victualling tribes,
 Are delving like diggers for nuggets of gold;

While doctors, and surgeons, and brave volunteers,
 Stand ready and willing to kill or to cure;
 And charlatans, sharper than sickles or shears,
 Are groping for garbage like rats in a sewer;

I placidly smile, though they simper or frown;
 I've comfort by day, and at night soundly sleep.
 A fig for the honours or gains of the town!
 I'd rather be home, looking after my sheep.

"Pooh ! bother your sheep !" sneers a cynical sage.

"For shame ! it's a pastime for idlers and 'muffs.'
Why live in a hut, like a bear in a cage ?

Go into the senate, and keep down the 'roughs.'

"Who cares for the weight of your carcase or fleece,
Your mutton or wool, except butchers and weavers ?
Pshaw ! rather than study such fellows to please,
I'd see them all pelted with shuttles and cleavers.

"Your 'jumbucks' * will gambol, and nibble their feed,
Grow fleshy and woolly, though lacking your care.
Hie hence from the bush, for the country's in need
Of the talent you're wasting on wilderness air."

I reply,—Mister Snapper, afflicted with bile,
Though far in the bush, I am far from asleep ;
I'm serving myself and my country the while,
By biding at home, looking after my sheep.

You ask me who cares for my mutton or fleece !
(O ghost of famed Mac ! † please to howl in his ears.)
Such questions might grieve my fat wethers to grease,
Or melt Mac's bronze bust, *if he has one*, to tears.,

Those wool-laden ships now afloat at your quays,
With scarce room on board for a cock-roach to creep,
Would seldom indeed meet your cynical gaze,
If squatters left home, and neglected their sheep.

Don't boast of your export of gold dust to me,
(To say I despise it would stamp me a fool,)
John Bull doubtless pockets your bullion with glee,
But what would he do if we grudged him our wool ?

If care will improve both my carcase and fleece
In weight, Mister Cynic, and quality too,
And meanwhile I add to my comfort and peace,
I will stay in the bush, though I irritate you.

Yes, Solons may make the Macquarie Street halls
Resound with their eloquence frothy or deep :
O'erjoy'd to escape from political thralls,
In peace I'll stay home, and look after my sheep. ‡

* Jumbuck is the native name for a sheep.

† M'Arthur, the first importer of sheep into Australia.

‡ The ruggedness of the metre of the above song, (especially in theseventh verse,) will be less noticeable, if the singer is riding a rough trotting horse, or travelling on a loaded wool dray, along a bush road.

CHAPTER XXVII.

CONTAINS an Account of the stormy Discussion which took place after Mr. Hides had finished his Song. Gold-Digging *versus* Sheep-Farming. Semi-tragical Termination to their Day's Pleasure, and total Wreck of their Boat.

WHEN Mr. Hides had finished singing, and had wiped his perspiring face, Christopher remarked, with tipsy hilarity, that it was "a very good song, and very well sung." To which ancient sentiment Mr. Pickett took exception, in terms too plain to be misunderstood; for he tartly told Christopher, if that was his opinion, he knew no more about music than a deaf Chinaman. Still he, Mr. Pickett, admitted, that though the squatter's strains were like a dray-horse pulling a ton and a half up Druit Street, there was far more harmony in his voice than sense in his song.

Christopher felt surprised at Mr. Pickett's altered manner, which in the former part of the day had been mild and gentlemanly; and whatever had made him so terribly cynical all of a sudden he could not tell, unless the mixture of liquors had turned acid on his stomach, and communicated the peculiar tartness to every word he uttered. But when Boxall began to criticize Mr. Hides's performance, a serious explosion seemed imminent, for his remarks were like jets of scalding steam and red-hot cinders. He declared that the song was as destitute of music as a cracked bell, or a hurdy-gurdy; that it was lopsided and heterodox in sentiment, from beginning to end, except the third line in the sixth verse; and the only good thing in it was "the ghost of famed Mac," which he heartily wished would howl in all the squatters' ears, until they were scared into a sense of their duty to their fellow men, and shamed out of their glaring selfishness at the same time. He then violently declaimed against that lordly class of colonists, in general, calling them by a variety of uncomplimentary names; and declared his conviction that Australia would not advance a peg, until a new Land Act repealed the monopoly which the squatters had long

enjoyed, and gave the poor man a chance to get out of the crowded cities upon a bit of land of his own.

Mr. Boxall argued, too, to the entire satisfaction of his fuddled friend Pickett, that "squatters were enemies to the social and moral improvement of the country. Facts which," he said, "he could bring fire-new arguments to prove, if necessary, and draw pictures of depravity arising out of the system, which would wither every Christian heart in the land to look upon. He maintained that squatters, in general, dreaded poor struggling neighbours worse than native dogs or wild blacks. And the idea of a church or school-house rising up in the vicinity of their runs scared them more than a sight of the devil would do; for they well knew that such institutions would form the nucleus of a township; and civilization in their neighbourhood was regarded by them as inimical to their immediate interests.—These are facts which a blind man would discern," added Mr. Boxall; "and in consequence of that heathenish selfishness of the squatters, their servants are debarred from all means for mental, moral, or social improvement; and the poor children in their establishment are growing up in a lamentable state of ignorance!"

After speculating at some length on the probable effects on the future interests of the colony of a large number of young men and women growing up untaught, Mr. Boxall wound up his wrathful rhapsody by declaring "it was a burning shame that diggers should be disfranchised;* and predicted that there would soon be a repetition of the Ballarat riots on the Turon diggings, if miners' rights were not respected, and the heel of the squatters' influence removed from that down-trodden, but industrious, class of colonists." He then took another sip out of the brandy bottle; while Christopher entered in his notebook his impression that the squatting and the digging interests in the colony were antagonistic.

Mr. Hides, whose patience was indeed a virtue, and who seemed more disposed to joke with his ruffled opponent than to be cross with him, hiccupped two or three times; then retorted, in a dry, sarcastic tone, that "diggers were certainly an exemplary class of men, wonderfully inoffensive and peaceful, and not at all given to rioting in any shape; very moral, and deeply interested in the welfare of the colonists at large, as anybody who had visited a gold-field would confess, if his mind

* Gold-miners are now represented in Parliament.

were not biassed by contrary opinions. Their zeal for the *public* good was at times rampantly enthusiastic, as evidenced by their loud 'shouts' for champagne after a lucky find; and the prevalence of that *public* spirit was the cause of that feline local attachment which diggers so often displayed, and the reason why so few of them went 'home' to spend their money, as the squatters were blamed for doing. The unselfish spirit of the miners generally, and their love for poor struggling neighbours, was strikingly evinced by their cordial welcome to the Chinese gold-gleaners; and the measure of their liberality to churches and schools was only to be ascertained by a careful inspection of the gold-fields in general, by persons with very good eyes in their heads.

"Very worthy men the diggers—hic—remarkably pushing colonists, no doubt, and amazingly zealous for the moral and mental improvement of the young population—hic!" continued Mr. Hides, with an ironical smile on his face. "But while I have said all that about them, and have left twice as much unsaid—hic—still I maintain that the squatters are the sinews of the colony, the pioneers of the land, the greatest contributors to the revenue, directly and indirectly, the back-bone to the commerce of the country, and"—

"I deny those positions, Sir," said Boxall, vehemently, "and am prepared to show you the approximate cost for labour of every ounce of gold that is raised, and to prove to you that there is sometimes more money expended in working a gold claim, which a man could almost hop over, than you pay for labour to graze over a tract of land nearly as large as an English county. I maintain that gold-diggers are the true pioneers of the land, and they develope its resources; while the squatters use it as the surly dog in the manger did the hay. Why should a sheep have as much land allowed him to nibble over as would support an industrious family?" added Mr. Boxall, rising, and gazing very fiercely at his imperturbable opponent, who was smoking his pipe, and looking as pleasant as if he were at a philharmonic concert.

Christopher was afraid Boxall was going to fight; but his fears on that head ceased when the irate digger exclaimed to his comrade, "Here, Pickett, catch hold of the tiller, and let me go into figures with him!" Then seating himself (for he could not stand steadily) beside the squatter, he pulled out his pocket-book, wherein were jotted various lengthy statistics of gold-mining, with an elaborate calculation of the cost of raising a ton

of gold dust, and a comparative estimate of the cost of producing the value of the said ton of gold in wool; which showed a triumphant balance in favour of the side he espoused. But before he had made any visible impression on Mr. Hides, or had even half convinced him that the figures were correct, they were aroused by the rumbling of distant thunder: and upon looking around them, they became conscious for the first time that a heavy storm was gathering. Formidable masses of black clouds were wildly rolling over from the southward; while vivid lightning ever and anon illumined the surrounding rocks, which were fast disappearing in the sombre shades of a stormy night. The late antagonists looked at each other for an instant, and their differences of opinion seemed to disappear before the common danger which threatened them.

"I think we are going to have a southerly burster," said Mr. Hides; "so you had better put your cyphering book into your pocket, Mr. Boxall, and take a reef in the sails, or we may be capsized."

"Yes, I think we had better shorten sail. Take a reef in the jib, Cockle, while we reef the mainsail. Make haste!" said Boxall, hastily pocketing his book, and glancing very uneasily at the awful aspect of the sky.

The sails were reefed very clumsily, and Mr. Boxall then asked Mr. Hides to take a turn at the helm.

"No, no, I would rather not steer in rough weather," said Mr. Hides. "You are the best sailor, Boxall. I only know how to pull an oar in smooth water, and talk about yachts at a tea table. I will do anything you order me to do; but I am not capable of taking command."

The storm clouds rolled over nearer and nearer, like huge volumes of brewers' smoke; and the incessant bursts of thunder made the earth tremble; while the lurid lightning reflected in the glassy surface of the water, completed a scene of terrific grandeur, rarely witnessed elsewhere. There was a dead calm around them; but only for a short time: for the ripples on the water in the distance plainly indicated that a violent squall was fast approaching. Fortunately for them they were to some extent prepared for it. Still they had far too much sail hoisted; for when the squall first struck the boat, it heeled over to the combings of the hatchway. The tacks and sheets had been let go, and were flipping about in the wind, and lashing the terrified crew, like stock whips.

"Lower the sails! Lower the sails!" shouted Boxall.

standing pale and almost paralysed. Christopher was clinging to the mast, howling under the incessant lashings of the jib sheets, and utterly helpless with fear. Pickett was equally useless, and was crouched down in the stern sheets, trying to protect his hatless head from the hailstones, which were as large as walnuts. Mr. Hides was a little more active. He let go every rope within his reach, including some that should have been kept fastened; then he and Boxall seized the mainsail, and dragged it down by main strength, at the same time breaking the jaws of the gaff, and carrying away the peak halyards. The jib had previously blown overboard, and helped to keep the boat's head to the wind, and to the topping seas which came rolling out of Rose Bay, ever and anon breaking into the boat, to the increased horror of the drenched party.

Had they possessed sufficient presence of mind and skill to have put their boat under manageable canvas, they might have run into one of the adjacent bays for shelter; but neither of them had the necessary nerve or skill to manage a boat in bad weather. Beside they were all more or less intoxicated.

"Mercy on us, we shall be drowned! We shall all be drowned!" gasped Christopher, as the top of a wave dashed in his face, and knocked his hat overboard. "What shall we do, Mr. Boxall?"

"I don't know what to do," replied Boxall, who, like many other fair-weather sailors in times of peril, felt his courage forsaking him, while his fears swelled as big as a thunder-cloud. "I don't know what is best to be done. What do you think, Mr. Hides? Shall we throw the ballast overboard, in case the boat should fill?"

"I know nothing about boats. I told you that before," said Mr. Hides excitedly. "We are drifting towards the rocks fast, I can see that plainly enough; and I can't swim a stroke. I thought you were a yachtsman, Boxall, or I would not have come in the boat at all."

"Let go the anchor, Cockle! Make haste! make haste! We shall all be smashed to pieces on the rocks," roared Boxall, with frantic gesticulations.

Christopher let go the anchor; and the long coir warp attached thereto was dragged rapidly over the combings; but lo and behold! the end was not made fast on board; so away it went altogether; and in two minutes more the boat struck on the rocks just below Bradley Head, and almost immediately sank in about five feet of water. With some difficulty they all

reached dry land, of course thoroughly drenched, and more or less lacerated by the oyster shells on the slippery rocks.

After a little deliberation, the unlucky excursionists resolved to make the best of their way to the north shore ferry. A very rough way it was, too; but onward they trudged, wet and weary, cold and hungry, and angry with each other, and with themselves individually; for they could not but feel that they had paid an alarming price for their day's pleasure. Whatever Mr. Boxall's private views were, he stoutly ignored all blame in the late mishap; and, after the current fashion, showed such an unmistakeable disposition to maintain his innocence, that for prudential reasons Mr. Hides and Christopher discontinued their efforts to convince him to the contrary, and wended their rugged way homeward, side by side, in silence; looking like miserable victims of misplaced confidence—and alcohol.

Soon after midnight they reached the Royal Hotel, when Mr. Hides faintly remarked, as he flung himself on a sofa, that “an hour before he would have given the title deeds of his station on Bogie Plains for a barebacked colt to carry him home; as he verily believed he should have died on the road with old rheumatic pains, soft corns, and head-ache.”

That Port Jackson is a delightful place for aquatic pastimes few persons will deny, who know anything of it; and it is safe for experienced boatmen; although the sudden puffs of wind over the high lands necessitate vigilance and expertness. But frequent accidents occur, and sometimes fatal ones too, from unskilful persons venturing into sailing boats. The foregoing mishap will exemplify that fact, and will perhaps be a salutary warning to some of my readers who are fond of the healthful recreation, but are unskilled in the management of a boat. I would add a recommendation to them, to hire a waterman when they wish to go afloat: then they may enjoy themselves with safety; for Sydney boatmen are in general skilful and careful.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

CONTAINS an Account of Christopher's parting Interview with Tim Rafferty -
More of Tim's Philosophy, and other interesting Matters.

Too many of my readers, I fear, can sympathize experimentally with the bodily bruises and mental cloudiness of the late jovial party on the morning after their mishap : with their nervous prostration and nausea, their aching brows and festering sores, their sun-burnt faces and blistered feet. Too many well know the meaning of their clamorous calls for soda water and brandy, soon after daybreak, and the reason why they were absent from the breakfast table. If I were to draw a monitory picture of their misery for the uninitiated, it would be as ineffective to convey an adequate idea of the horrible reality as the cosmographic view of the destruction of Pompeii, which I once sat and gazed at in London, and composedly ate a pottle of strawberries at the same time. The pen is as powerless to describe the peculiar matutinal qualms of a "fast man," as it is to convey even a tingling conception of a gouty toe,—the feelings of shame and self-reproach that overload his racked brain on first awaking from a night of grimy dreams,—the cloudy doubts as to the extent of his last debauch, and the nervous dread lest his ruinous waste of money, time, and health, should not escape the cognition of friends and busy neighbours,—the host of dark influences which press upon his heart like iron weights, and crush his feeble hope to death,—and the shuddering conviction that relief for his maddening enervation is only to be found in the potion that caused his misery. Mortal tongue cannot tell the horrors of a drunkard's waking moments, or describe the craving which he feels for his morning draught, glad to purchase temporary respite at any price. Alas ! sometimes at the cost of body and soul too ; for the devil often stalks in after the waiter, with a horrible supply of Death's tools ; and, with a leer like the glare of delirium in the maniac's eyes, he whispers, "Here is a panacea for human misery,—a momentary pang, and annihilation. Pull that trigger, and you will"— But I beg pardon for this digression ;

I am forgetting my purpose to touch lightly on gloomy subjects, if I cannot avoid them altogether.

At lunch time the crest-fallen friends met, and held a consultation, when it was agreed that they should equally bear the expenses of their late treat; and Christopher and Pickett were deputed to wait upon the waterman, to satisfy him for the loss of his boat, and to contradict the report of their death, which had appeared in the newspapers.

The waterman looked very serious when the bad news was gently broken to him; and began to expatiate in touching terms on the good qualities of his boat, after the general custom of lauding departed persons or things, and said he would not take ninety notes for it on last regatta day,—which was possibly because no person had made the offer. He ultimately, however, agreed to compromise his claim for forty pounds, which sum was paid to him; and after calling to assure the editors of the newspapers that they, the excursionists, had not been drowned, they returned to the hotel, to further count the cost of their day's frolic, and to square up accounts with their friends Boxall and Hides, who were too much cut up with oyster shells to walk out in public, without risk of being mistaken for a pair of prize-fighters.

At tea-time a funny old country gentleman told a little story which caused a titter round the table. He said he was witnessing a deep tragedy in a Sydney theatre one evening, which produced a melting effect upon the audience. In the most touching scene of the performance the stage was darkened, and hung with black drapery, and three judges in black robes were seated behind a black table, about to pass sentence of death on a beautiful young girl who stood between two grim-looking gaolers. The whole house was hushed in profound silence, and not a sound was heard, save the sobbing of a few sensitive ladies in the boxes, and the sighing of some spoony youths in the pit. Suddenly a sailor in the front gallery shouted out, in a nautical key, "Look at that lubber with a big head," pointing at the same time to the senior judge, who certainly had an extra-sized head, crowned with an enormous wig. The effect was electrical, and the whole house was filled with loud laughter. The judges nearly chuckled their wigs off, and the condemned prisoner shook all over in her futile efforts to smother her tickled fancy, while her grim gaolers laughed outright. The sailor was kicked into the street for his wit, and the performance after a time proceeded; but the balance of the tragedy was a complete farce.

While the company were enjoying that story, Mr. Boxall rose from the table, looking very angry; and a few minutes afterwards Christopher saw him in the balcony, warmly discussing with Mr. Pickett the most proper way of punishing the funny old countryman for the gratuitous insult. Mr. Boxall would not be persuaded that the joke was not pointed at his head, which was naturally a large one, and his face was very much swollen and bruised from contact with the rocks on the previous day.

After vainly trying to pacify the choleric digger, Christopher retired to his bed-room, in a miserable state of mental and physical depression, and there he again solemnly resolved to turn over a new leaf. Hundreds of young men of his mould have done the same, while suffering from the acute qualms of conscience and a disordered stomach: but their vows, made in reliance upon their own moral strength, were as treacherous as rotten backstays to a ship's mast, which would carry away with the first strain, and perhaps wreck the ship on a lee shore.

Christopher was sighing over an old letter from his sister, full of tender words of love, such as loving sisters only know how to write, when the waiter tapped at his door, and said that "a person below wished to speak to him."

"I cannot go down to see anybody," said Christopher, dolefully. "What sort of person is he, Sancho?"

"He's a queer-looking fellow, Sir; half a sailor and half an Irish hodman, with 'Calabash' written on his hat."

"O, yes, I know who he is; show him up, Sancho," said Christopher, who was pleased at the prospect of a chat with his faithful old servitor. In a few minutes Tim Rafferty sidled into the room, holding his hat with both hands; and, with a reverent bow, said he "hoped Mr. Cockle was hearty."

"Pretty well, Tim, thank you—a—that is to say, I am rather poorly this evening. I think I ate too many oysters yesterday, and I got badly cut about the hips with oyster shells; and my poor face is rather scorched with the sun, as you can see."

"Troth, an ye may say that, Sir; it looks like a boiled bullock's heart—savin yer prisince—yer own blissed mother wudn't know a bit ov yez, dash'd if she wud; an yer sister ud be scared out an out."

"Take a seat, Rafferty," said Christopher, who was desirous of changing the topic. "I am very glad to see you, Tim. How are you getting on?"

"Ony jist middlin, Sir, as Paddy O'Teague sed whin he was

stuck in a bog up til his brace buttons. I'm not meself at all; that's the truth, Sir; for the ould ship is as dismal as a church vault full ov leaden coffins; an the rats as av walked aboard from the jetty kick up sich a philleloo ivery night, that I can't sleep a wink for drameing ov wraiths an all sorts ov ugly varmint; so thinks I to meself, I may jist as well go ashore an see Misther Cockle, as sthop aboard to be bothered to death intirely. I ax yer pardin for disturbin yez, Sir."

"Don't mention it, Tim; I am glad you have come, for I feel very lonesome this evening, and I wanted to see you before you left for London. I believe you will sail in a day or two."

"Yes, Sir, we'll be off pritty soon now; an by yer lave I'll ax yer advice afore I go about a thing or two as I've bin thinkin ov all the voyage out. Ye see, Sir, me brother Phelim an his family over in ould Ireland are breakin their hearts wid harrd work, an it's little enough they git for it aythir, beyant taties an butthermilk, wid a red herrin now and agin, an a tashte ov bacon at holiday times. So I've bin thinkin, iv I can any git em all out intil this counthry, they'd pretty soon have a house full ov comforts, an a fat pig in the sthy to the fore; for Phelim's wife Judy is as tidy a crathur as iver fisted a broom; an the girrls are jist like their mother, ony they're a bit younger nor she, an a mortal sight purtyer too. They've bin illegantly rared, an no mishtake; an can do anythin at all, in doors or out, from milkin a cow to makin faather's Sunday breeches—savin yer prisince. Och, Misther Cockle, they'd make lovely wives, shure enough, for some ov the prime bhoys ov this country, who are maybe jist now grieving themselves to ghosts, poor crathurs! bekase they've got nobody to cook their taties or their kangaroos' tails for em; or to clane up their huts an look swate at em whin they come home from shepherdin, or the like o' that.

"As for Phelim's bhoys, they are thumpin great chaps, tough an springy as cork fenders; an rale honest boys to boot—thof I say it for em. They'll clare the way afore em, I'll ingage, as the drunken drover sed ov his cranky cows. Thim's the right sort ov customers to 'advance Australy,' an no mishtake, cos they're as chock full ov worrk as young cart horses. Faix, I'll back em agin any bhoys in the worl'd for houldin a plough or handlin a tater fork, or a shillaley aythir; for ridin a donkey widout a saddle, or doin any mortal thing as isn't breakin the laws. Thin they're all as sober as Faather Mathew himself,

which is a capital thing, an ull save em from sore heads, an maybe from sore hearts too. As for me brother Phelim—the faathir ov em all—he can make a cart wheel wid anybody alive; an he can stand up and preach like a thorough-bred parson too; shure, many's the time I've heerd him do it, more shame for me to say so, whin I'm sich an out an out haythin.

“I was shpaking to Mr. Toddle about em all tother day, an ses he to me, ‘Thims jist the very crathers as ull git on well in this counthry, Tim, an nothin at all to stop em—plaise God: so send for em as soon as ye like,’ ses he. ‘There’s lots ov land here as ull grow anything in rayson from taties to sugar-canes, an they cud asily rint a bit iv they couldn’t afford to buy it out an out.’ Thin he up an tould me how as he know’d many poor families who a few years agoe settled down on claring leases, wid barely a haporth ov anythin belongin til em, barrin the bits o’ duds on their backs; an ivery one ov em as was steady an sober saved money. ‘Many ov em,’ ses he, ‘are now livin on farms ov their own, an some iv em are rale gintlemen, an their sons an daughters are growin up as larned an polished as lords an ladies, an fit to stand alongside the proudest gentry in the land, widout looking down at their boots, or feelin ashamed ov their name.’

“Thin Misther Toddle up an told me a comical yarn about an ould chap as had jist arrived in the colony from Ireland, and was goin up in the ‘Nimrod’ river steamer to see his son, who had come to this counthry twinty years afore, wid all he owned in the worlrd stowed away in an emigrant’s box, jist fifteen inches square. Old Paddy was shmokin his dudeen on the deck iv the sthamer, while the sailors were hoistin cargo out ov the fore hold. Prisintly they hooked up a case marked, ‘Denis Rooney, Esquire.’

“‘Arrah, bhoys! an who does that box belong til? Wud yez tell me that, iv ye plaise?’ sed Paddy, openin his eyes as wide as his weskit pockets, an scratchin his head wid both hands.

“‘Why, it belongs to Misther Rooney, of Rowdeboys Hollow, to be sure,’ sed the mate.

“‘Och, Philleloo whack! Good luck to the land! An is it thrue that I shud live to see me bhoy Denis a squire? Hulla-balloo! whack-row-de-dow! Good bhoy Denis!’ shouted Paddy at the tip-top ov his voice.

“The sailors all grinned, av coorse, bekase they thought the owld chap was cranky; for he hopped about the deck as

though he'd got springs in his brogans. Prisintly the mate axed him his name.

"'Me name is it?' sed Paddy; 'why, it's Denis Rooney, shure, an Denis the squire is me own son; an Dinah his mother wud say the same iv she was alive, poor soul. Och! good luck to the guvnor ov the land that raised me bhoy intil a squire. Wheugh! Hoorra for the honour of ould Ireland! for Denis is an Irishman ivery inch ov him. Och! be the piper, what a lark! That I shud live to see this day! I'm the luckiest ould man in the world, so I am.'

"Wid that the ould chap dashed his hat on the deck, and danced a rale Irish jig; while he whistled 'Paddy Carey,' till he whistled all his wind away. Thin down he sat on the windlass, an cried wid joy; an all the passengers in the ship laughed to see the ould daddy so plaised to find his son a squire."

"But I've not tould yez all that Mr. Toddle sed to me, Sir," continued Tim, after he had done laughing at his story. "'It's thrue for yez, Tim,' ses he, 'that there are hapes ov poor people in Sydney,—be the same token where in the worrld will ye go to an not find poor people, I'd like to know that? Some ov the unlucky crathers are forced to stop in the City bekase they haven't got the means of gittin intil the counthry, to make a start for themselves, an maybe many ov em don't know how to work a bit ov land, or to work anythin else, barrin their jaws; so they wudn't make a livin on a farm, if they got it for nothin at all—not they, poor souls—more's the pity. I shud think a dale before I tould yez to sind for yir frinds, Tim, iv they were merely in-door folks, or iv they expected to make a livin out ov their wits intirely; for there's lots ov clever folks in the colony who often go hungry to bed, an have ony an impty cupboard to smell whin they git up agin; and there are far too many folks in the colonies,' ses he, 'ingaged in the mere business of exchange, from merchants down to street hawkers. But,' ses he, 'if yer frinds be rale out-an-out farmers, an steady an savin to boot, as you say they are, Tim, they'll do well enough, I'll ingage, an bliss the day that they fust smelt this rich land; for even supposin they shud not be able to settle down on a farm ov their own at the first start out, there are plinty ov large farmers who would be glad enough to hire em at good wages, an give em good rations too.'

"'Bedad, thin, they shall come out pritty quick, Sir,' ses I; 'an so long as they can knock about an pick up an honest livin

by harrd worrk, sorra a one one ov em ull lie down an starve ta death, I'll ingage ; for there's not a lazy bone in a Rafferty big enough to make a button ; an nobody cud say to a man ov em, 'Black is the white ov yer eye,' widout gittin a black eye for himself in less nor a minute, for tellin a thumpin big crammer. Troth, they shall all come out,—as the dentist sed to the lady's stumps,—an maybe it ull be the best job I iver did in me life. Who knows but they may all be squires by an by ? bhoys an girrls too, like lucky Denis Rooney."

"I'm very glad to see you show such an interest in your brother's family, Rafferty," said Christopher ; "but how are you going to arrange to get them out here ?"

"As aisy as drawing a corrk, Sir," said Tim, slapping his pocket. "I've got a bit ov money by me, though not so much as I ought to have iv I'd got all I've spint. Still an I'll have got enough to put Phelim under way, an whin he gets a fair wind he'll heave me a tow-line, I'll be bound. Any way it's right to help me poor brother, iv I can, an I'll do it too, please God. If Phelim gits any luck at all, iv it isn't bad luck, me money ull be as safe as the bank, an he'll pay it me back whin I ax for it ; but iv he niver pays me he'll always owe it me, an that ull be better nor carryin it about in me pocket, an maybe git knocked down an murdered, same as I was in Melbourne. Mr. Toddle ses iv I pay four pounds a piece for em at the Emigration Office in Sydney, the government ull bring em all out thegeather in a first-class ship, wid galores ov good rations, an a dochter to physic em into the bargain. I may have to pay a little more for the owld folks ; but shure its mighty chape they do it, an nobody can grumble at that, as the prisoner sed whin they give him roast mutton an new pertaties for dinner.

"I'm goin to pay the money to-morrow, Misther Cockle ; an I wanted to ax yez if ye'd please to look about yez whin yez go into the bush, an iv yez see a bit ov land to suit em, jist kape it in yer eye till me frinds come out, an I'll be iverlastingly obliged ta yez. Maybe ye'll see me out here agin prisintly, wid me bhoy Barney an his sister Norah, to sittle down comfitably ; for I'm gittin awfully sick ov the say, and that's a fact, Sir."

"I don't wonder that you are sick of the sea, Tim ; but you will have troubles on shore, as I have found every day since I landed," said Christopher, with a sigh. "Do you think you shall like this country ?"

"Troth, I'd like it betther iv it worn't quite so warrm, Sir. Still an all I suppose there's some sort ov climate iverywhere,

an a poor man can't afford to shirk inconveniences, an if none ov us had no trouble we wudn't know the value of pace an quietness. I think there's a good openin for me here, Sir, as the whaler sed whin he peeped down the shark's throat; anyhow, I'll try me luck. I've had some pritty long yarns wid Mr. Toddle, who has had hapes ov experiance: an he ses I cud make a rale good livin here, bekase I can turn my hand to anythin amost, from cuttin hair to cookin a dinner for a jintleman; or from reefing topsails to cobbling a pair of old brogans. Lave an ould sailor alone for makin himself handy, Sir; an dear knows I'm not afeard ov worrk, nor yit afeard of not gittin enough ov it. He ses, too, that lots of fellers come out here to betther themselves, as ud betther uv stopped at home althegither, for they niver stick til a thing long enough to see iv it wull suit them at all, or to larn to do it well; but they go scuddin about like marines in a squall, gawkin an gapin afther all sorts of mummeries an moonshine, wearin themselves out intirely, an niver doin a haporth ov good; and thin they turns round, and blames the counthry for their own laziness or want of common gumption, an often they lead other guffies like themselves to waste their time, an rin their noses into mischief an misery.

"Mr. Toddle told me a good yarn, Sir, which I shall log down in my memory, an think ov it iv any of them chuckle-headed customers ever try to wheedle me to go cruising afther flying Dutchmen, as the crew of the 'Jolly Rambler' did, a month ago, and all got put in chokee for it. They bolted ashore one night, whin the captin an mate were at the play, an off they scudded to some new diggins, wid a crowd ov land-lubbers, who are allers ready to be up stick and be off, whenever they hear a shout,—like rowdy boys rinnin to an Irish fight; but whin they got to the place where they expected to fill their dunnage bags wid nuggets, sorra a tint ov gold was to be seen at all, cos there niver was none there; an whin the sailors were all diggin fit to break their backs, down in a big deep hole, an swearin bekase they cudn't see nothin but dirt an darkness, the constables cum up an cotched em as nicely as rats in a wire trap, an walked em all back to Sydney; whin they got three months in chokee for rinnin away from their ship. But that's not the yarn Mr. Toddle told me; this is it, Sir. He said that a ship belonging to one ov his friends was chartered to carry a deck load of sheep for a short voyage; an the Captin bargained ony to charge freight for the animals he landed safe an sound.

"Well, whin they had got close up to the end ov the voyage, they fell in wid a smart breeze ov wind, an a sea broke aboard, an smashed some of the bulwarks, an carried an old ram overboard at the same time. No sooner did the other sheep see their unlucky mate go over the side, than bless'd if they didn't all begin to jump overboard, one after another, as fast as they cud git through the gap in the bulwarks.

"'Hullo! bad luck to the Dutch!' shouted the skipper, mighty savage, you may be sure, Sir, to see all his freight goin out ov his pocket at that rate. 'Lay aft here, everybody! Look sharp! bear a hand! The divil's in the sheep, for sartin! Sthop em, Jack, Dick, Mike! sthop em, boys! they'll be drownin themselves althegither, an I'll be chated out ov me freight, ivery blissed hapenny ov it. Bad luck to the crathers, knock em down wid a handspik. Knock em into mutton, bhoys.'

"Av course the sailors cum runnin aft, all in a flustration, but they cudn't stop the woolly-headed crathers, not a bit ov it, Sir; they wud go, in spite of all rayson, barrin a few, who were convinced by a crack on the head wid a handspike.

"That's a rum yarn, Sir," added Tim, putting on his philosophical face. "But it's jist like human natur, as I've sane it on both sides ov the worrld, an in the middle of the worrld, too, shure enough; an it shows that it's true what the wise man says, that 'one fool makes many.' I've tould yez the story to caution yez, bekase I've sane more nor one thief o' the worrld coax ye inta mischief; axin yer pardin for spakin so abould, jist as I'm goin to lave yez, Sir."

At the last words of Tim, Christopher put his hands before his eyes, while tears slowly oozed from between his fingers, but he spake not a word.

"Arrah, honey! what's the matter wid yez?" said Tim, compassionately. "Shure, I hope I haven't sed nothin to frit yez. I wudn't hurt the feelings ov yer little toe-nail for the 'Calabash' full ov Dutch cheeses, dash'd iv I wud. Spake to me, jewel; an tell me what's ailin yez. It kills me outright to see ye cry, bekase I'm as fond ov yez as iv ye was a little bird, so I am."

"I'm better now, Tim," said Christopher, removing his hands from his face. "It was only a little weakness, that's all. I am very low-spirited to-night, Tim."

"To be sure ye are, darlint; didn't I see that whin I fust come in? an isn't that the very rayson why I stopped all this

time blatherin to kape yez all alive, as the fellow sed when he stirred up the bear wid a boathook? But whist, Sir! aisy a bit, I've got somethin in me jacket pocket as ull make yer laugh all over yer face, I'll bet a penny, if ye'll jist let me read it til yez. It's the loveliest little bit ov potery as iver I seed, an I'm sorry I can't sing it, bekase I don't know the tune; be the same token, I've got no more tune in me than a croupy peacock, since I cracked me voice shouting 'Hullaballoo' at Larry O'Niel's weddin. Shall I read it til yez, Sir?" added Tim, as he produced from his pocket the manuscript which had so excited his fancy. After obtaining Christopher's assent, Tim stood up, and recited the following rub-a-dub rhymes with considerable gesticulation and grimace.

DIALOGUE OF PADDY M'CRAE AND MICKEY O'SHEA.

"Och! whack row de dow! is it thrue that I see—
 Me old shipmate, rough rollicking Pat?
 In an illegant coat, just the fit to a T,
 And a great long-faced hat, black as my old dudee,
 And as glossy as Biddy's blind cat.

"Troth it's more nor two year since we met, I declare,
 And ye'd then neither shirt, shoes, nor tile:
 Sich a mighty great change makes me stagger and stare;
 Sure, Alley, yer aunt's died an left yer her heir,
 Or ye've married rich widee M'Kyle?

"But come to the 'Badger,' and let's have a ball;*
 (As it's church-time we'll go the back way;)
 For I'm dhry as a possum-skin nail'd to a wall,
 Of your luck ye'll be afther telling me all,
 An yourself shall stand trate for the day.

"Arrah! Paddy, me jewel, now don't rin away—
 Cos I'm not sich a dandy as you.
 Though me clothes are all rags, shure I'm Mickey O'Shea,
 I'd a put on some betther—*if I had em*—to-day,
 And I'd only a dramed I'd meet you.

"Be the hoky! I'd pay for a hogshhead of rum,
 I'm cranky wid joy, so I am,
 But I cum out this morning through Sydney to roam,
 Wid no cash in me pouch—troth! I've left none at home—
 So I maydn't be thrying to sham."

* Ball—glass of spirits.

- “Is it rum, Mike, yer mane? och! thin sorra a drain
Will I ever taste more while I’ve breath.
Aforetime I drank till it druv me insane,
And the divil himself wriggled into me brain,
An pritty nigh scar’d me to death.
- “It’s thrue for yer, honey, that when we last met,
I had nayther got shirt, shoes, nor hat;
Now yer see I’m well rigged agin sunshine or wet;
I’m free from diseases or care-breeding dæbt,
And yer see I look jolly and fat.
- “Besides at me house, jist fornint at Balmain,
Where I’d allers be plazed to see you,
I’ve a darlin young wife, healthy, tidy, and clane,
Shure the purtyest crater as ever wos sane,
And an illegant baby-boy too.
- “I’ve a snug bit o’ ground, where I spend me spare hours,
And thumping big taters it grows;
I’ve a pig in the sthy—sich a pig—by the powers—
I’ll wager there’s not one in Sydney like ours,
Her chaaks nearly cover her nose.
- “An I’ve sint twinty pounds to me ould dad and mam,
For yer know they were murtherin poor;
An I’ve sint for me sister an young brother Sam,
An to pay for their passage it’s saving I am;
Och! this comforts me heart, to be shure.
- “Each week I can asily earn two pound ten,
For yer know I am good at me trade;
While agone I was poor as a croupy ould hen,
Faix, I’d allers bad health, rags, and misery then,
But now, shure my fortune is made,
- “A taytoller steady I iver will be,
An I wish, Mike, that you’d be the same;
Ye’d soon be as healthy an happy as I,
Have a house, an a wife, an a pig in the sthy,
An some children to kape up your name.”
- “Och, tunder and turf! Pat, shure, we’ve bin long mates,
Some beautiful shindies we’ve shared;
Our shillelays have crack’d many dozens of pates;
If you can be tamed, so can I, be the fates,
For we both in one cabin were rared.”
- “Mike, I’m goin to church, but ye’re not in the key
To go wi’ me this moruin, I know;
But go to me house, and me darlint ye’ll see:
I’ll give yer some clothes, an yer dinner, an tea,
An to-night althegither we’ll go.

"An to-morrow ye'll join the teetotallers' band,
And sthick to yer pledge ivermore ;
Ah, wont yer now, Mike ?" "To be shure, here's my hand,"
Cried out Mike, "an it's thrue to me colours I'll stand,
An long life to yer, Paddy, asthore !"

"Bad cess to the grog, for it's crippled our race,
Since the days of our grandfather Noah ;
But, while I've got wind I'll give Satan no pace,
For I'll shout to my friends, till I'm black in the face,
Hallowloo, me bhoys ! dhrink it no more."

"What do ye think ov that for a bit of potery, Sir ?" asked Tim, after he had carefully folded up his manuscript, and returned it to his jacket pocket.

"It is very good," said Christopher, smiling feebly. "Where did you get it, Tim ?"

"Mr. Toddle guv it to me, Sir ; an he made it all out ov his own head, as the barber sed ov the lawyer's wig. I ony wish I could shout the sinse of that song intil the heads and hearts of all me frinds an me enemies too, soh. Wud'nt I sing out in airnest ! Howsomever I mane to do as Mike did, Sir, 'an stick to the pledge ivermore.' Sorra another dhrup iv grog will I iver taste so long as I've got a haporth ov sinse left in my skull ; an axin yer pardin for bein so free, if ye'd ony jist promise me afore I go to be a thorough-bred taytotaller as long as ye live, I'd sing 'Whack-row-de-dow' all the way home and out again ; for well enough I see it, Sir, an there's no mishtake about it at all, the grog is ateing into your vitals like rats into a ship's timbers, an I wudn't give the price ov the buttons on me jacket for yer brains, iv ye don't stop that racket that ye've been carryin on for the last four months."

"Well, I will consider over all your good advice," interrupted Christopher. "I don't want to hurry you, Tim, but I think I hear them shutting the doors downstairs."

Tim took the hint, and after affectionately pressing Christopher's proffered hand he stammered out his last adieu, and departed, leaving Christopher sobbing like an infant deserted by its nurse.

Half-an-hour after Tim's departure Christopher got over his soft fit, as he called it. Such fits with him, though frequent, were very transient. Feeling in want of some refreshment, he descended to the dining-room, and ordered Sancho to bring him a bottle of pale ale, and something to eat.

"Something to eat, Sir? Yes, Sir. What would you like to take, Sir?" said Sancho.

"I don't know, I'm sure," said Christopher, listlessly. "Anything you have handy, Sancho."

"Would you like a Welsh rabbit, Sir?"

"O yes, very much indeed; I am particularly fond of rabbits. Yes, Sancho, bring it as quickly as you can. I did not know you had such dainties in Sydney."

"You don't mean to say you are going to eat Welsh rabbit for supper," remarked Mr. Hides, who was lying on a sofa, sipping his last glass of hot toddy, previous to going to bed.

"I do not intend to eat a whole rabbit, certainly not," said Christopher, "but"——

"Ha, ha, ha!" laughed Mr. Hides. "A whole rabbit indeed! Come and sit down here, Cockle, and I will tell you one of our friend Toddle's rum stories. It will perhaps warn you against eating hearty suppers; besides I want something to rouse me up just now. Ha, ha, ha! You are an original, certainly, Cockle."

Christopher smiled good-humouredly, then sat down beside Mr. Hides, who forthwith began the following comical story:—

CHAPTER XXIX.

MR. TODDLE'S whimsical Tale of Mr. Crummy's Mishaps and Miseries, the first Night he was separated from Mrs. Crummy.

“Man and wife should ever
Use their best endeavour
To be parted never
Through their life's career.”—OLD SONG.

MR. AND MRS. CRUMMY were as comfortable an old couple as ever delighted in a bit of cosy chit-chat over a little black tea-pot and a dish of hot muffins. They had gently jogged along the highway of life together for many changeful years, bearing each other's burdens, and sharing each other's joys. By dint of untiring industry in the baking business, they had acquired a comforting competency for their declining years; and while they ungrudgingly enjoyed the fruits of their labours, they did not scruple to give out of their purse, or larder, a portion to any *really* poverty-stricken person who knocked at their door.

Like Mr. and Mrs. Bubbs, of “one-horse shay” notoriety, “they'd no brats to plague their lives;” they lived in a roomy house, in a respectable part of Sydney; kept one female servant—old Molly Koddles—and a boy in buttons, to look after the chestnut pony and the phaeton. They were pretty generally respected by their neighbours, and were looked upon as exemplary models of conjugal affection. Mrs. Crummy's healthy face, round as a Sally Lunn tea-cake, would crinkle into smiles worth sixpence to see, as she coquettishly patted Mr. C.'s bald head, and told him she loved him then as fondly as she did in years gone by, when he daily dropped his basket from his back, and cried, “Baker,” at her area railings.

To my fancy, one of the happiest sights in creation is an old couple smoothing each other's way to the grave, like “John Anderson my Joe,” and his loving spouse.

One fine morning Mr. and Mrs. Crummy set out in their

phaeton, on a visit to their old friends, Mr. and Mrs. Butts, of Newtown. They spent a very pleasant day, and towards its close were preparing to return to their own domicile, when the stormy aspect of the weather induced Mr. and Mrs. Butts to press their guests to stay the night with them.

"Couldn't possibly do it," urged Mrs. Crummy, "not if it were raining bakers' rasps and half-pound weights. Molly Koddles would be scared to death if left in the house alone for a night. She believes in ghosts, the old goose."

After many pros and cons, it was decided that Mrs. Crummy should remain, and Mr. Crummy should return home: an arrangement, however, to which Mrs. Crummy assented with extreme reluctance; for since they were first pronounced man and wife they had never been separated for a single night. But her scruples were eventually overruled, and after receiving a batch of kisses, soft and warm as new loaves, off set Mr. Crummy in the phaeton, driven by the boy Ben.

Passing a cook's shop on his way home, the savoury fumes of some steaming hot edibles so excited Mr. Crummy's appetite, that he was irresistibly impelled to buy a pound of black pudding; and as he put the greasy dainty into the pocket of the phaeton, his mouth watered at the anticipation of his oft-longed-for luxurious supper, in the absence of Mrs. Crummy, who did not approve of substantial suppers; for she said they induced snoring, and roaring, and kicking; besides many other ills and inconveniences.

"Have you got any cold cabbage?" asked Mr. Crummy of Molly, as he handed her the black pudding on his arrival home.

"Yes, Sir, and a few cold taters."

"That's right, Molly," said Mr. Crummy, chuckling like a monkey at a mince-pie: "chop them all up fine, and fry them with the black pudding, in plenty of dripping, and let me have them as quickly as you can; piping hot, Molly, and plenty of nice mustard."

In a short time the supper was ready; Mr. Crummy heartily enjoyed it, and wished the while that Mrs. Crummy was less firm in her objections to such rational meals; for he didn't believe a good supper would hurt anybody. He left a small bit for Molly, for he was not a greedy man; and after he had meditated for about half an hour, according to custom, and smoked a pipe at the same time, he went to his bed-room, said his prayers, drank a glass of cold water,—Mr. Crummy was a

rigid teetotaller,—put on his nightcap, and then jumped into bed.

He lay rather restless for some time, and was engaged in calculating whether his disquietude was caused by the day's excitement, the ride home in the rain, the absence of Mrs. Crummy, or those noisy cats just under his window; or whether the whole of those causes combined kept sleep from his eyelids. At length it is certain he did drop off to sleep; for Molly has since declared, "he snored so loudly, that it frightened her out of her first nap."

Just as the clock struck the ominous hour of one, a loud, unearthly howling seemed to fill his chamber, and he beheld, with indescribable horror, the door open and admit, amid a flood of light, red as the glare from a hot oven, a tall, powerful-looking man, in the working garb of a slaughterer. His legs and arms were bare and bloody, and his long dishevelled hair was clotted with grease and gore; on his shoulders he carried a butcher's tray, filled with pig's chitlings; in one hand he had a large three-legged iron pot, half filled with blood, and a long butcher's knife glistened in his belt. He put the tray full of chitlings on the drawers, and with the black iron pot and his hideous knife in either hand, he drew aside the bed curtains, and exclaimed in a harsh hollow voice, "Get up, Crummy, I'm going to bleed you."

"I'm much obliged to you, Mr. What's-your-name, but I'd rather not," stammered Mr. Crummy, with a terrible shrinking of every nerve. "I don't approve of phlebotomy."

"How dare you tell me that after the supper I saw you gobble last night? a pound of blood pudding and a frying-pan full of bubble-and-squeak! You don't like blood, eh? You wicked old gorgier! Come, bare your arm," said the man, putting his iron pot on the white counterpane, and leaning over towards Mr. Crummy, with his gleaming knife between his teeth; you'll have typhus fever, and infect the whole neighbourhood, if I don't doctor you. None of your nonsense now, you gormandizing old horse-leech! Hold out your arm directly, or I'll cut your head off, and drain every drop of blood from your carcass."

"Oh! oh! hoo-o! Betsy! murder! murder!" shrieked the terrified Mr. Crummy, writhing and struggling away from the assassin, till he fell over the opposite side of the bed, to the floor. As he fell, he grasped the mosquito curtains, and dragged down the whole top apparatus of rings and rods, with a loud

discordant rattle, which resounded through the whole house. There he lay and kicked, until he got himself from head to foot inextricably entangled in the net curtains, like a bluebottle in a cobweb; and the more he kicked and rolled, the more helplessly did he become enveloped. "Hoo-o! murder! murder!" he roared, at the top of his lungs, and his noise soon alarmed the whole quiet neighbourhood.

"Murder! fire! fire!" shrieked old Molly Koddles, throwing open her back bedroom window, in a state of absolute terror. "Fire! fire! fire!" was re-echoed down the street from a score of voices. The cry soon found its way to the engine station, and in ten minutes all the alarm bells in the city were ringing.

Mr. Crummy continued to shout murder without stopping to rest; and in his violent efforts to extricate himself from the net, he had overturned the wash-stand and dressing-table, the clatter of which almost drove Molly frantic with fright. She hurriedly put on the skirt of her gown in the dark, and was preparing to escape from the house, which she verily believed was haunted by a host of evil spirits, when a violent knocking at the front door, and ringing of the bell, completed her distraction. She rushed down stairs, and drew back the fastenings, when the door flew open, striking her on the nose, and causing the blood to stream over her white night-jacket profusely. Just at that moment a policeman's bull's-eye lantern was held to her face, and revealed her ensanguined disfigurement in all its horrors.

"Let me out, let me out!" screamed Molly, trying to force her way past the policeman, who, however, seized her tightly by the throat.

"Murder! murder!" bellowed Mr. Crummy, from under the bed up stairs.

"Murder! Help! help!" bawled the policeman, at the same time blowing his whistle, which soon brought three more policemen to his aid, followed by a rabble of men, women, and boys, which soon increased to a crowd of the alarmed neighbours, all eagerly inquiring, "What's the matter?"

The blood-besmeared Molly Koddles was escorted by one of the policemen to the female watch-house, loudly protesting her innocence all the way there, and being now and then cautioned by her obdurate keeper, "Not to say anything to criminate herself."

Leaving one of their force to guard the entrance to the house, and to keep back the crowd, which now almost blocked up the

street, the other two policemen, guided by the half-smothered cries of murder, ascended to Mr. Crummy's bedroom, which they found in great confusion. After a little time, they discovered Mr. Crummy under the bed, completely enveloped in mosquito gauze. With difficulty they released him from his entanglement, when he sat up, and stared about him with horrified bewilderment.

"Whatever is the matter, Mr. Crummy?" asked one of the policemen.

"O my! O my!" sighed Mr. Crummy. "Where's that butcher?"

"What butcher do you mean?"

"Eh? O dear me! I don't know him!" replied Mr. Crummy, rubbing his eyes. "He was going to slaughter me."

"He's drunk," muttered the second policeman, with a knowing wink to his comrade.

"How dare you say such a thing?" asked Mr. Crummy, wrathfully. "I'm a teetotaller. What do you mean by coming into my chamber, and insulting me in this way, you impudent fellows? Be off with you directly, or I'll shoot you both! Thieves! thieves! Hoy, Molly—Molly Koddles—Ben! where have you got to? What the dickens is the meaning of all this rumpus? I'm fairly at my wits' end. What a fool I was to leave my wife at Butts's!"

"Hold him tight there, Bob," said the first policeman to his mate, "while I go and quiet that mob outside, and send for more help. If he's obstreperous while I'm gone, clap the 'darbies' on him."

"Hooy! hooy! hooy! Clear the road there! Mind your bunions and bad legs!" cried a chorus of noisy voices, as No. 1 Fire Engine drove rapidly up, through the scampering crowd, closely followed by Fire Engine No. 2. "Where's the fire?" inquired the foremost fireman, smelling and sniffing like a terrier at a rat-hole.

"It isn't lighted yet," said a jeering voice in the crowd. "Hold on a bit, they arn't quite finished the murder."

In the mean time, the boy Ben had mounted the chestnut pony, and ridden off at racing speed to acquaint his mistress that the house was on fire, and Molly Koddles had murdered her master.

Mrs. Crummy's feelings can better be imagined than described; but being a woman of strong nerve, she did not faint when she required all her faculties. Her good friend Mr. Butts,

too, was a man for an emergency. He at once ran to the stable, put his horse in the buggy, and in less than ten minutes was driving rapidly along the road, with Mrs. Crummy by his side. Unfortunately, just as they were turning a corner within sight of the house, the buggy was suddenly upset by Fire Engine No. 3, which galloped by without stopping to pick them up. Mr. Butts and his companion were, however, thrown into a nice soft gutter, and were unhurt. Mrs. Crummy, with characteristic energy, got upon her feet as quickly as possible; and leaving Mr. Butts to right his buggy, and scrape the mud out of his mouth and ears, she hurried to her house. With difficulty she forced her way through the crowd in front, who were noisily discussing various versions of the cause of alarm: some asserting that Mr. Crummy had murdered Molly; others, that Molly had murdered Mr. Crummy; and some maintaining that there was no murder at all, nor fire either, but old Crummy had got *delirium tremens*, and had cut his own throat.

Vigorously pushing her way up stairs, Mrs. Crummy entered her chamber, where, to her horror and amazement, she beheld Mr. Crummy, with his face as purple as a beetroot, and very outrageous at being forcibly held down on his bed by two policemen; while half-a-dozen other policemen stood by, debating what was best to be done, under the mysterious circumstances.

"O, my dear Betsy! bless your little heart!" said Mr. Crummy, bursting into tears when he saw his wife. "I'm so glad you've come home; you shall never, never leave me again. I have been nearly murdered since I left you. Turn all these fellows out, Betsy, dear. What do they want in our bedroom, I should like to know? And what do they mean by treating me like a lunatic? I'm not mad, Betsy; you know that, my ducky. Speak to these constables, dear."

"What is the matter, my dear Crummy?" asked Mrs. Crummy, excitedly. "Tell me at once, Gregory, dear—whatever is the cause of all this strange uproar and excitement?"

"I don't know, I'm sure," whined Gregory, scratching his head, and gazing vacantly about the room. "Where's the tray with the pig's chitlings?"

"The what?" asked his wife, drawing back a few paces from him, in suspicion. "What do you mean, in the name of wonder?"

"Why, he put the tray of pig's chitlings on your drawers with the nice clean cover, the nasty fellow!"

"Who did?" inquired Mrs. Crummy, while her widely open eyes and mouth expressed wonder and horror.

"How should I know who he is?" replied Gregory, wildly. "He was a great big ugly fellow, dipped in blood, and he was going to cut my head off with a carving-knife!"

"Gracious me! he's mad, I do believe!" said Mrs. Crummy, wringing her hands, and turning to Mr. Butts, who stood behind her, looking as bewildered as if he had just escaped from a bear. "O, Mr. Butts, what a dreadful calamity! Policeman, will you run for Dr. Pixide? Make haste, pray do!"

"I don't want the doctor," roared Gregory. "Mrs. Crummy, don't be ridiculous. I'm not mad, I tell you again; but you'll pretty soon make me so, if you treat me in this way. What the dickens is all that hubbub about outside? And how is it you are covered with mud? Will somebody else tell me what's the meaning of all this? Why don't you go away, policemen? What do you mean by staying in my wife's chamber? I'll shoot every one of you, if you don't be off directly. Where's my blunderbuss?"

"O, mercy! mercy!" groaned Mrs. Crummy. "Whatever possessed me to leave my house for a night? I shall never forgive myself—never! Where's Molly Koddles?"

"She's in the watchhouse, Ma'am," replied a policeman, gravely.

"Watchhouse! What on earth is she there for?" gasped Mrs. Crummy, more than ever bewildered.

"Why, I seized her as she was rushing from the house, covered with blood, and apprehended her on suspicion of murder."

"Of murdering whom?" asked Mrs. Crummy.

"I don't know at present, Ma'am; and I confess, the whole affair is an enigma to me. There were alarming cries of murder issuing from the house about an hour ago; and when we broke in, we found the master under the bed rolled up in the mosquito curtains, and heaps of broken furniture about the room. But the old gentleman has been so cranky ever since, that we have been unable to elicit anything like an explanation."

"Good gracious!" sighed Mrs. Crummy. "What a dreadful mystery! But what are the fire engines here for?"

"I don't believe they were wanted at all, Ma'am; for although there were loud cries of fire heard from a back window, I have not seen or smelt any fire yet. I think the engines may go home."

"O, my dear Gregory! do pray explain this horrible tragedy. What does it all mean? I'm distracted! What is it, my pet?"

"I don't know, I don't know!" whined Gregory, pressing his hands to his forehead. "I'm distracted too. It's all a frightful illusion: black pudding and bubble-and-squeak, that's all about it. I'd better have eaten a horse's tail, and a pint of grey peas, or my old gutta-percha goloshes, stuffed with horse-leeches. Ugh! my very marrow shudders when I think of pork shops."

"Bless my soul and body!" exclaimed Mr. Butts, with a woful shrug, "what a melancholy visitation! and so sudden, too! Now, my dear Mrs. Crummy, sit down, and be as calm as you can. Don't ask him any more questions till the doctor comes. It's plain to me his poor head's wrong; his reason is wandering. Hold him tight, policemen!"

"What do you mean by those remarks, Butts, you big block-head?" said Gregory, fiercely. "It's plain to me *you* have been wandering about with my wife, in an extraordinary manner; and I shall force you to explain to me what brought you here, in the middle of the night, with Mrs. Crummy, and both of you bedaubed from eyes to toes with black mud. You ought to be ashamed of yourself, for treating your friend's wife in such a disgraceful way. I was a goose for leaving my wife; I can see that plainly enough now. But I'll have satisfaction out of you, Butts, as sure as my name's Crummy. I'll punch your head to-morrow."

"O, dear, dear, dear!" sobbed Mrs. Crummy, as she sank into an easy chair, almost overcome with her excitement. "My poor dear Crummy! whatever has happened to him? What shall I do?"

"What are you crying for, Betsy, you ninny?" vociferated Mr. Crummy; "there's nothing the matter with me, I tell you. Go, and wash your face, and take that muddy bonnet off; then kick all this rabble out of the room, and stop that horrible racket outside; and then I'll tell you all I know about this horrible disturbance, and that will be precious little. I'm as bothered as if I were in a boiler-maker's workshop, with all this inexplicable hubbub. Egad! let me get out; I'll soon stop that yelling outside, I'll warrant!" he exclaimed, as he suddenly forced himself from his keepers, and rushed into the front balcony, from whence he shouted, at the top of his voice, to the assembled multitude below him:—

"What on earth do you mean by kicking up this row in front of my house in the middle of the night? You ought to be ashamed of yourselves. Go away, I say, every one of you, this moment, or I'll have you taken up. Confound your impudence! What do you mean by it?"

"Hooray! there's old Crummy in his shirt," shouted a leading voice in the crowd. "Throw him over, and we'll skin him, the blood-thirsty old badger, to go and murder poor Molly Koddles."

"What do you mean by that?" roared Mr. Crummy, in a rage. "That's libellous: catch that fellow for me, some of you, and I'll prosecute him with the utmost rigour of the law. The wicked story-teller! I never touched Molly Koddles in my life. Go away I say, everybody, this very minute."

"Yah, hoo!" yelled the mob;—"Heave the door-scraper at his head," cried the previous speaker.

"If you dare touch my door-scraper, I'll"—

"Come inside my good friend," said Dr. Pixide, going into the balcony, and gently leading Mr. Crummy inside the room, then closing the windows. "There now, sit down on the sofa quietly, and tell me what's the matter. Let me feel your pulse."

"Matter? why, there's nothing at all the matter with me, Doctor," said Mr. Crummy, "only I'm half crazy with all this noise and nuisance around me. Fire engines, and a hooting, insolent mob outside; and my bewildered wife, and that booby Butts,—dirty as ditchcasters,—with a whole squad of policemen inside, trying to persuade me that I'm mad. Bother them all, I say! I'd as soon be shut up in a house chock-full of tomcats, that I would. Just go and get me my breeches, Doctor, will you? I'm shivering and shaking as though a thousand little goblins had been pelting me with snowballs."

"I can explain part of this mystery, I dare say," continued Mr. Crummy, when the doctor returned with his apparel; "and I would have done so an hour ago, if they had allowed me to speak quietly, and not held me down on my bed like a maniac. I've had a horrible fit of nightmare, that's all I know about it, positively; but I supposed I roared out a little in my sleep, and that gawky noodle, Molly Koddles, confound her! has alarmed the whole city. I foolishly ate a pound of black pudding and a dishful of fried cabbage for supper last night, and I'm not used to such rich meals at bed-time. But I'll take care never to eat another hearty supper off black pudding, while my name's Gregory; no, not even if the Mayor and

Aldermen should invite me to one of their banquets. Now that's all I can tell you, Doctor. You must inquire of somebody else, if you want to know any more."

"I see, I see," said the doctor smiling; "I think I understand it all now; and there is no serious mischief done. Sit you here quietly for a few minutes, Mr. Crummy, while I go and explain matters to the folks in the next room." So the doctor went, and explained. Mrs. Crummy's fears were soon appeased, and by degrees her nerves recovered their tone. The police inspector sent one of his men to release Molly from the watch-house, and another to dismiss the fire engines. The clamorous mob slowly dispersed: some of them rather disappointed that there was neither fire nor murder. A few of them got a sort of inkling of the origin of the alarm; but as the news spread from group to group, it got varied and distorted into a dozen different shapes,—the majority of the crowd believing that the real cause of the row was, old Crummy got drunk, and beat his poor wife blue with a black pudding.

When Mr. Hides had finished his story, and had recovered from the boisterous laughter which it excited, he said to Christopher, with a look of mock seriousness, "After that solemn warning, Cockle, if you eat a Welsh rabbit for supper, you deserve to dream that some cockney sportsman is shooting you for a wild bunny. Lest you should think our friend Toddle is over-inclined to the marvellous, I will give you his apology for publishing that story; and it is but fair to add, that he does not often allow his fancy to take such ridiculous flights. He says, alluding to the story,—

"Just for once in a way, I humour my imagination, by recording a few of its vagaries; at the same time, I feel conscious that it is not a wise appropriation of time. Whether I was asleep or awake, I am uncertain; but certain I am, that the foregoing fancies flitted through my excited brain last night, as I lay on my restless couch, after eating an unusually hearty supper of cold stewed peaches; so I think I will resolve, like Mr. Crummy, to eat no more hearty suppers, for I believe them to be very often terribly subversive of refreshing slumbers."

While Mr. Hides was speaking, the waiter reappeared with a small dish on a tray; and when he took the cover off, Christopher stared with wonder and disappointment.

"Rabbit, waiter! where is it?" he muttered.

"Yes, Sir, Welsh rabbit, Sir. Take any thing more to, drink, Sir?"

"Eh? No,—no, thank you," said Christopher whereupon the waiter left the room, smirking.

"I have not the most delicate stomach in the world," said Mr. Hides, nodding at the dish on the table. "In fact, bushmen in general are not very fastidious in their diet; but, I declare to you, I would as soon eat a bullock's hoof for supper as that mess. In my opinion, more than half the disorders which so many doctors in Sydney are employed in curing are produced by over-feeding."

"Why, it is nothing but toasted cheese and mustard," said Christopher musingly, while he sniffed at the dish before him. "Ugh! I could not eat it, if I were paid for it. I thought I was going to have a nice delicate little bit of tame rabbit for supper. I think I will take a couple of antibilious pills, and go to bed. Good night, Mr. Hides."

CHAPTER XXX.

CHRISTOPHER'S Departure from Sydney for his Uncle's House. His startling Adventures on the Road, including his disagreeable Bedfellow. Arrival at Cockleorum Hall, and loving Welcome from his kind Relatives. His Embarrassment at the Embraces of his Cousins.

CHRISTOPHER had looked anxiously from day to day for the return of Mr. Slyver; but that gentleman did not appear: and there was no letter, registered or unregistered, from his agent at the Grubangrabit mines. Christopher felt loth to neglect his friend's interests, still he could not longer delay paying his promised visit to his uncle, without giving offence; so, next morning, he sat down, and wrote a long explanatory letter to Slyver, garnished with expressions of solid friendship. He then went to the bank, and procured a draft for £25, which he forwarded to Mr. Chizzleton's brother Reuben, in Melbourne, as requested to do. He next went on board the steamer, that plied to Budgerry river, and secured a berth in the sleeping saloon; then returned to the city, and bought a few presents for his cousins, and a pair of silver spurs and a double-barrelled gun for himself; and, after getting his hair cut, his head shampooed, and a troublesome tooth stopped, he called upon his agent to give his final directions about the management of his commercial speculations during his absence from Sydney.

"I am pleased and proud to see you, Mr. Cockle," said Mr. Thugman, as Christopher entered his grimy office, which was full of frowsy odours of rats, tallow candles, old bags, and mouldy maize. "Pray take a seat, Sir. Allow me to place this cushion on the chair. Delightful morning, Sir; makes one's heart brim over with"——

"Excuse me, Mr. Thugman, if you please; I am rather pressed for time. I am thinking of leaving Sydney, by this evening's steamer, for my uncle's place, and I wish to have a little confidential chat with you, before I go," interrupted Christopher, who perceived that an overflow of serious sentiment

was forthcoming, which he had not time to appreciate; in fact, he did not care for much of it at any time.

"I am quite at your service, Mr. Cockle, and shall be happy to be able to benefit you by my advice, or otherwise. I feel deeply grateful for the confidence you have reposed in me, and shall do my utmost to deserve it, Sir," said Mr. Thugman, in a soft, solemn voice. He then wiped his eyes, leaned back in his chair, and tried to look uncommonly honest and tender-hearted.

Mr. Janus Thugman was a skinny man of middle age; and when he was insinuating himself into the confidence of a new customer, his countenance was as smoothly pacific as a new pewter pot full of cold-drawn castor oil. His eyes were deep in his head, though very close to his nose, and looked less vulpine when seen through his green goggles. His tongue was soft as a ripe banana or a mud oyster; he could talk as glibly as any sham in the land on moral or social topics, and was fertile in chimerical schemes for universal reform. He often spoke with proud modesty of his relations' standing in society, and of his own sitting in church. His long lean nose glowed with glory when he could safely snap at the popular men of the day, especially preachers; indeed, he had a hungry relish for the errors of society in general, and, after gnawing the tender parts of his neighbours' reputation to the bone, he usually concluded with a hollow groan, which was meant to express pity and pious horror. He affected an enthusiasm for the fine arts, when he had such an artless listener as Christopher; in short, he was an "artful dodger" altogether, to use a low, but appropriate, phrase.

Janus made periodical visits to the *mill* near the Supreme Court, and was speedily passed through the smutting machine, and "dressed fine." In general there was but little more than chaff and smut-balls in his bulky bags of "tailings;" still his grist usually paid the fees of the miller and his men.

The above is an imperfect sketch of the person to whom Christopher began to open his heart, and to confide many troublesome secrets; and, as he did so, Janus would smirk, frown, or weep, as was most appropriate; and, while well lathering the silly youth with sophistry, (vulgarly termed "soft soap,") he was as bobbingly obsequious as a cockney barber's boy shaving the Lord Mayor.

I need not detail the lengthened conversation between Christopher and Mr. Thugman on that morning, which was on.

various subjects appearing to bear directly upon Christopher's interests, temporal and otherwise. In two hours he left the office with tears in his eyes, having been almost overwhelmed with the affectionate concern which his greasy-tongued agent had manifested for his body and soul, as well as for his capital and credit.

That evening Christopher left Sydney for his uncle's house. For cogent reasons I do not choose to tell the locality ; so I merely state, that it was not far from the stirring little town of Kickadingo, and my reader need not search the map of Australia for it.

The contrast between the coasting steamer "Churnaway" and the "Calabash" was so great, that Christopher involuntarily turned up his nose as soon as his feet touched the deck ; and when he descended to the saloon, which was filled with sleeping passengers, he turned up his nose again, for a peculiar odour of brandy, bilge-water, potatoes, and empty boots, was prevalent.

"Where is my berth, steward?" asked Christopher, soon after the vessel had got to sea. "O, ah, yes. Here it is, I see ; number ten on the starboard side. But there is somebody in it, steward ; how is this ? I say, Sir, excuse me ; but you have got into my bed," said Christopher, gently shaking a hairy-faced gentleman, who had taken possession of berth number ten.

"Ugh ! oh ! hoogh ! O dear me ; your berth, is it, Sir ? Beg pardon—made a mistake. I'll turn out again in a minute. Poo—whoo—hoogh."

"Never mind, Sir ; don't trouble yourself to move ; I shall not turn into that crib." Then, as Christopher re-ascended the companion stairs, he said to the steward, "You had better take a basin to the gentleman in No. 10."

Everything he glanced at on board the "Churnaway" suffered in comparison with the "Calabash." The decks were lumbered with cargo and luggage ; the engines were rather rusty, and smelt suspiciously of rancid butter. The stokers were all of a double smut ; most of the sailors wore moleskin trousers and cotton braces, blucher boots and nondescript head-gear, and might have been mistaken for shepherds or bullock-drivers. Not a bit of gold lace was to be seen on even the Captain or officers ; in short, there was not a tint of romance about anybody or anything on board. Profit before appearances was evi-

dently the practical motto of the owners of the "Churnaway." Nevertheless, she paddled along swiftly, and in due course arrived safely at her destination.

An hour afterwards Christopher found himself squeezed in a two-wheeled article, called a mail-coach, in company with three young men, who were going to the diggings, and an old lady and her daughter, who were going to their home. From the latter he heard a good deal about his uncle and aunt and cousins Cockle, who, he found, were highly respected in their neighbourhood by all classes of society.

The coach jolted along over a very rough road, up hill and down hill, with many narrow escapes from overturning. The diggers, meanwhile, related some thrilling stories of bushrangers, which made Christopher regret that he had not left his watch and jewellery, with his other personal effects, in his agent's custody.

Towards evening they stopped at a little roadside inn, to change horses and to refresh passengers: while there, a thunderstorm passed over, and heavy rain continuing, the coachman opined it would be useless to proceed, as they could not cross Deadman's Creek: so he resolved to stay the night at the inn, and to continue their journey at daybreak the next morning. The landlord said he would do the best he could for his guests; but it did not appear likely that he could do much, as his accommodations were very meagre. "The gentlemen," he said, "could have the double-bedded room, and his wife would make up 'shake-downs' for the old lady and her daughter, somewhere or other."

Soon after tea, one of the diggers proposed a game at cards, and invited Christopher to join them, to which he reluctantly assented; but after playing for two hours and losing a sovereign, he excused himself for retiring to his chamber, as he was weary with the jolting he had had in the coach, and want of sleep on the previous night.

The landlord showed him into a low-roofed room upstairs, where were two beds; and after telling him to take which one he chose, bade him good night. Christopher examined the beds, and selecting the cleanest of the two he disrobed, and got into it; and though his friends downstairs made a good deal of noise, he was soon sleeping soundly. By and by he was aroused by laughing voices in his room, and on opening his eyes he saw the diggers preparing for bed.

"Halloa, mate!" shouted one of them, who was far from

being sober, "you will have to roll over a foot or two nearer the wall; because I do not see how we can fairly share the bed, if you take the middle."

"Are you going to sleep with me, Sir?" asked Christopher, eyeing his rough bedfellow as timidly as though he were a gorilla.

"I am so, mate; and I hope you don't kick, because I've got a sore leg," said the digger, with a leer at his comrades in the other bed, who were in very merry moods.

"O, I did not know we were going to share the bed," said Christopher, creeping as close to the wall as he could. "I am afraid there will not be room enough for us both. It is a very small bed for two."

"Plenty of room, if you don't want to turn over; and if you do, you can easily get out of bed to do it. By the by, I say, governor, sorry to trouble you; but do you see this spike-gimlet on this chair? If so be as I should have a fit in the night, I wish you would jump up smartly, and jam the handle of the tool between my teeth, to keep me from biting my tongue off; then rouse up my mates and the landlord to hold me, for I kick like a wild colt, and shall perhaps break my toes against the bedposts."

"Hem—a—are you much troubled with fits?" asked Christopher, with a tremulous voice.

"Yes, I am, worse luck. They sometimes come on after such a smoking day as this, especially if I have had much knocking about; and blamed if I don't believe every bone in my body is shaken out of joint by that confounded old coach." The digger then blew the light out, and rolled into bed beside Christopher, who lay trembling and sleepless, wondering whatever he should do, if his companion had a fit in the night. He had never before slept with a man; and a half-tipsy stranger, in a small bed, on a sultry night, was objectionable enough; but when, added to that, was the awful dread of his bedfellow being seized with a fit, and kicking like a mad colt, it is no wonder that Christopher was too excited to sleep a wink.

Presently his companion began to snore; and Christopher was just encouraging a hope that he would snore on, free from fits, till daylight, when he gave a violent start and a loud grunt, which so terrified the poor youth, that he immediately slipped out of bed, as gently as he could, and, seizing his clothes, he descended the stairs in the dark; and as he did so, he fancied he heard subdued laughter from the inmates of his bed-

room; but he was not sure it was not his late bedfellow in a fit. He opened the door of the parlour, and was about to take possession of the sofa, when he was again shocked by the loud shrieks of the old lady who had been his companion in the coach.

"O dear me! what am I doing? I beg pardon a thousand times, ma'am—very sorry indeed," mumbled Christopher, hastily rushing into the hall again, with his apparel huddled in his arms. But he had not been there long before he saw the landlord descending the stairs, with a light in one hand and a black-fellow's waddy in the other.

"Halloa, you Sir! What the mischief is all this racket about?" shouted the host, looking red and wrathful, but fortunately recognising his shivering lodger, just in time to avoid breaking his head with the waddy. "What have you been doing in that old lady's room, eh?"

"Nothing, landlord, I assure you. I made a mistake, that's all: the lady will tell you the same, I am sure. I did not know there was any one sleeping in the room;—I didn't, 'pon my honour, landlord. I was just lying down on the sofa, when the lady let me know she was there, and I ran away directly."

"What has brought you down here at all, making an uproar in my house?" asked the host.

"I cannot sleep, Sir, that's it. The fact is—a—a—I do not like—a—a—that is to say, the bed is too small for two, this hot weather."

"Tut, nonsense! too small, indeed! why, my wife and I slept on that same bed for seven years. You had better go and try the tap-room table; that's the only vacant stretcher I've got in the house."

"Thank you, landlord, I should like that very much; and while you are down, will you give me a bottle of beer?"

The host complied in a surly mood, and after showing his troublesome guest into the tap-room, he returned to his bedroom, grumbling as he went.

Christopher dressed himself, then uncorked his beer bottle and lighted his pipe; and when the excitement therefrom had dulled down, he stretched himself on the tap-room table, and watched for daylight.

Next afternoon the mail coach arrived at Kickadingo, much to Christopher's satisfaction, for he had endured no small amount of bantering from his male companions; (at which the old lady and her daughter were evidently amused, if they did

not join in it;) and he had good reason for suspecting that, after all, the fits of the digger were only feigned, and his sore leg as well, in order to secure a bed to himself.

"Your name is Cockle, I am sure," said a benevolent-looking old gentleman, seizing Christopher's hand, as he was dismounting from the coach.

Christopher looked into his face, and the resemblance to his father was so striking, that he burst into tears, and could only sob, "Dear uncle!" while he received a truly paternal hug from his hearty old relative.

"Come along, my boy! Your cousins are dying to see you—they've been expecting you so long. I am very glad to see you, my dear boy! that I am," said Uncle Nick, shaking hands with his nephew all the way to the phaeton, on the other side of the road, wherein were seated his three blooming daughters; their bright eyes flashing with love and fun.

"Here's your English cousin, girls, come at last. Take care of him," said the old man, who was so over-excited with joy, that he forgot a more formal introduction; and ran away, to see after Christopher's luggage, which its owner had quite forgotten.

The bashful youth blushed intensely as the three smiling girls held out their hands to welcome him, and to help him into the carriage, looking the while so longingly at him, with their pretty lips pursed up into kissing shape. He felt funny all over,—as he afterwards explained in a letter to his sister; but he did not know if it were proper to kiss cousins, as he had never seen a cousin before; so, in reply to their kind inquiries for his health, he modestly replied, "I'm very well, thankee. How are you?"

In a few minutes Mr. Cockle returned with Christopher's gun in his hand, and said, as he pantingly approached the carriage, "I quite forgot to introduce you, my boy, though it is scarcely necessary. These are your cousins, Dora, Kate, and Polly, and they have all been looking for you as anxiously as though you were bringing them a box of new bonnets from London. Ods bobs, girls! why don't you kiss him, and tell him you are glad to see him? for that's the truth."

Christopher's face grew red as a lobster while each of his gentle cousins gave him a kiss of welcome; and his knees knocked together like a landsman being shaved by Neptune's barber.

After stowing the luggage on the box of the carriage, beside

the driver, off they started, and in a little less than two hours they drove up an avenue of forest oaks to Cockleorum Hall.

A motherly old lady trotted out to the front gate, and fondly embraced Christopher as he stepped out of the carriage; and a tall, handsome youth, in a scarlet jumper, introduced himself as cousin Tom, and shook the hand of his newly-arrived relative with all the warmth of an Australian. Christopher was glad to escape to his dressing-room as soon as possible, for—as he muttered to himself—his head was fairly bothered with the incessant prattle of his pretty cousins all the way home.

Half an hour afterwards he was seated at the tea-table, which was overspread with farm-house fare, in fashionable style. After tea, they all adjourned to the drawing-room, where his merry cousins playfully disputed for the honour of sitting next to him on the sofa. Then they chatted with him so freely, and took so many semi-sisterly liberties with him, that he was really pleased when his aunt scolded them for being so troublesome to him, and told them “they ought to see that the poor boy was weary with his long journey, and wanted to go to bed.”

At that hint he at once arose, kissed his aunt affectionately, and bade her good night; then shook hands with his uncle and cousin Tom, and nervously approached his female cousins, to *shake hands* with them too, when, with a ring of merry laughter, they all clasped their soft arms around him at once, and kissed him all over his face. After which he hurried upstairs to bed, with his heart ticking like an alarm clock.

“Heigho!” sighed Christopher, as he drew his nightcap over his ears, and sank down on his soft pillow. “What a serious mistake my Ma made, when she supposed my Australian cousins were little whitey-brown cannibals!”

CHAPTER XXXI.

BRIEFLY describes Uncle Nicholas, his Family, and their Home. Christopher's Mishaps on his first Essay at Parrot-shooting with his Cousin Tom. Something about a Cow.

UNCLE NICHOLAS was a hale old man, the counterpart of his twin brother Noah : in fact, they were as much alike in their general expression as two ironbark trees ; and in their mental mould there was a striking similarity ; Nicholas being, perhaps, more conversant with the affairs of the world in general, than his untravelled brother. Uncle Nick was an experienced old colonist. The fine estate of Cockleton was his own, and was as free from liens or mortgages as it was from stumps. He had purchased it, more than thirty years before, at the current upset price of five shillings per acre, with his own savings and his wife's small dower. He had displayed good judgment in the selection of his land, and afterwards much skill and tact in improving it ; and it was generally admitted to be the finest, if not the largest, estate in the district. From time to time he had let off portions of his brush land to industrious, steady families, on clearing leases ; but instead of adopting the general policy of allowing three or four years for clearing, then continuing the tenancies merely from year to year on a fluctuating rent, he granted fourteen, and in some cases twenty-one, year leases, at a reasonable rent, with certain equitable provisos for renewals. The result of his fair and foreseeing system was, that in a comparatively few years he had his estate in a flourishing condition ; for his tenants had a direct interest in improving their farms, in planting orchards and hedges, and in making comfortable homesteads. With one or two exceptions they were all in prosperous circumstances ; and the more money they made, the more they pleased their ungrudging landlord ; whose favourite motto was, "Live, and let live."

On the contrary, some of the neighbouring land-owners had their estates disfigured by miserable make-shift huts and out-buildings, cockatoo fences and temporary drains. On some of

the farms might be seen a few self-sown peach trees, and an apology for a flower garden; but the majority of the tenancies were as free from fruit trees or flowers as a turnpike road. The uncertain tenure upon which their farms were held induced carelessness among the tenants, and a disposition to make as much each year as possible. Consequently, the system of farming was slovenly; and, instead of those estates improving, they gradually grew of less value; and in some places the land became so impoverished by constant cropping, with merely surface ploughing, and so overrun with noxious weeds, that tenants could barely afford to pay rent at all.

The original uncouth-shaped cottage, built of gum-tree slabs, with a stringy bark roof, in which Mr. Cockle and his loving wife had passed the first ten years of their wedded life, had long since given place to a substantial stone house, which was dignified by the name of Cockleorum Hall. It was pleasantly situated on an eminence overlooking the flourishing farms of the tenantry, and the shining waters of the Budgery river, which wound its tortuous way for many miles like a colossal silver eel. Detached from the Hall were numerous out-buildings, including barn, dairy, stables, tobacco presses, men's huts, stockyards, milking pails, &c.; for Mr. Cockle used to farm extensively at one time, though he had long since discontinued to do so. He had a vineyard, an orchard, and a large kitchen-garden, and he kept a few cows, for the use of his homestead. The bush and pasture land adjacent to the Hall were undulating and park-like; and the shrubbery in front of the house was a perfect picture.

Uncle Nick had married the daughter of a respectable settler on the Hawkesbury river about thirty years before, and she had proved a helpmeet in every sense. They had had six children, four of whom survived,—the three daughters, and one son, whom I have before introduced. The girls had been educated at home, and carefully trained under their fond mother's eye; and though as frolicsome as young fawns, they were guileless and free from affectation or sentimental whimsies. They could cook a dinner, if need be, as well as play the piano; and were as skilful with their needles and thread, as with their fancy wool wares and their drawing pencils. They could iron their father's shirts, or make their brother's every-day clothes; in short, they were both accomplished and domesticated.

Tom Cockle was educated at Mr. Rattanbury's school at Kickadingo, and was a smart intelligent youth, thoroughly

conversant with country affairs; but as ignorant of town life as his fast-trotting cob, Geebung, or his favourite kangaroo dog, Spring.

It is necessary to add a few more particulars of Uncle Nick's early history, which I shall do as briefly and as delicately as possible. Mrs. Beecher Stowe wittily remarks, that "it is not always the greatest sinners upon whom the tower of Siloam falls, but only those who happen to be under it when its time comes." I believe they are not always the greatest sinners who are impeached by the laws of their country, but only those who happen to be caught in the act or fact of breaking those laws.

Nicholas Cockle in his youth had unfortunately associated himself with some dissolute young men, and, as "evil communications corrupt good manners," he was corrupted. He acquired a passion for gaming, and other vices, which are its concomitants. Step by step he was lured into the commission of crime, the recollection of which caused him many years of sorrow and suffering. Conviction speedily followed his offence, and he was sentenced to seven years' banishment from his native land. Fortunately for him, he was, soon after his arrival in Sydney, assigned to a humane master, who compassionated the poor youth's misfortunes, treated him with Christian-like kindness, and afforded him opportunities of proving the genuineness of his contrition for his past errors.

"Like begets like" is a universal law; and the consideration of the master was reciprocated by the poor convict. He proved a faithful servant, and after the term of his penal servitude had expired he hired with the same master; and remained with him till his death, in the capacity of confidential overseer. The testimony of his master was to the effect, that he never had a more trustworthy man in his service. Unlike too many of his unfortunate class, he was strictly temperate and industrious; so he saved money, as I before stated. His conduct all through his after-career had been uniformly straightforward and honest; and there were few men in the district who were more respected in his sphere than Nicholas Cockle.

In course of time he grew rich, and his influence extended proportionately; but he was always modest and retiring, though shrewd and intelligent: and those good qualities were appreciated by discerning men around him. He never boasted of his possessions, nor yielded to any of those little eccentricities which often afflict rich men, and make poor men shudder to

approach them. He had on several occasions been pressed by deputations to represent the county in which he lived, in the "Colonial Legislature;" but had modestly declined the honour and responsibility, on the plea that he considered it morally wrong to undertake duties which he felt himself incompetent to discharge efficiently. He was induced, after some pressing, to accept the appointment of Justice of the Peace; and he filled that honorary office for many years with credit. His judgment and impartiality were rarely questioned. He was also an active member of many local committees, as well as of the Municipal Council of Kickadingo. He was generally known as a kind master, a liberal landlord, and an obliging neighbour,—in short, as a consistent Christian. His charity was almost unlimited; and though his name was not always to be seen on the list of contributors to funds for religious or charitable purposes, there were very few such funds that were not assisted from his purse; and scores, perhaps hundreds, of poor persons have been helped out of difficulties by his generosity. In fact, it is not too much to say, that Nicholas Cockle and his family were as much beloved as any family in the land, though of course they had a common share of the "envy, hatred, and malice" of ill-natured neighbours, who are always jealous of persons better than themselves.

If any of my readers should fancy the above description of an emancipist is too favourably drawn, after the gloomy sketches they have seen of such characters from other pens, I would assure my doubting friends, that it is a deliberate and impartial statement of facts (names, of course, excepted). And further, I would say that, during my nearly thirty years' experience of colonial life, I have met with a multitude of pleasing examples of thorough reformation among that unfortunate class of colonists. I have had several such colonists in my employ, at various times, and have entrusted them with thousands of pounds' worth of property with perfect confidence. Of course, I have seen many emancipists of a very different character; but I am not discussing the convict question now: indeed, I never mean to discuss it again, unless I have far stronger reason for doing so than at present. With much delight I record my opinion that the line of demarcation between the immigrant and emancipist classes (which some visitors to our colony have thought they saw so clearly defined) is being fast obliterated by the footsteps of civilization,—in fact, they are extra sharp-eyed folks who can see the *line* at all. Happy would it be for this great land, if all who

really love it would strive to bury that "line of demarcation" altogether, and let the flowery sod grow over the rut which has caused so many jars and jolts to our social machinery!

I have now said all that it is necessary to say descriptive of Christopher's newly-found relatives and their homestead; and if my readers' taste corresponds with mine, they will surely say that, in such a family, and such a home, he ought to have felt happy.

"What do you say to a little sport at parrot-shooting, Kit?" asked Cousin Tom, one morning, about a week after Christopher's arrival at Cockleton.

"Hem! I should like it amazingly; but it seems such a pity to shoot parrots. They are very scarce birds in England."

"Are they?" said Tom. "They are not scarce here, as you will soon discover; and as for cockatoos, they are a perfect scourge to our tenants when the maize is beginning to tassel. What sort of a shot are you, Kit?"

"I scarcely know; for I have not fired off a shot in this country." (He might have added, nor in any other country.) "I bought a fine gun in Sydney, a regular stunner."

"Pooh! You should not have done that, Kit: that is mere waste of money, and giving yourself unnecessary luggage to carry, too. We have guns enough here for a small company of volunteers. Where is your piece? Let me have a look at it."

Christopher hastened to his room, and soon returned with his gun, pointed in a very unsportsmanlike manner, for which he was slightly rebuked by his cousin.

"What did you give for this double-barrelled burster?" asked Tom, while he examined the piece with a very suspicious air.

"Ten pounds, that is to say, guineas. Bilks would not take a penny less. It is warranted a 'Joe Manton.'"

"Joe the Marine," said Tom, laughing at his cousin's simplicity. "I would not give you fifty shillings for it, Kit. It is as heavy as a carronade."

"All the stronger for that, I should think," said Christopher, shouldering his gun, and sallying out with his cousin; but suddenly recollecting, after they were a mile from the house, that he had no ammunition, except a box of caps.

"I have plenty of powder and shot," said Tom. "I think we had better load before we go any further; for we may start a few bronze-wing pigeons in the brush, or perhaps come across a

wallaby." They accordingly loaded their guns; and away they went, through a piece of brushwood, and out on an apple-tree flat, when suddenly Christopher shouted in an ecstasy, "My eye, Tom! Look, there are two fine poll parrots sitting on yonder branch."

"Pop at them, then," said Tom; "but you need not stop for those stragglers, we shall see hundreds more directly. You shall have a parrot pie for dinner to-morrow; and that is a dainty dish you Londoners don't very often set before the Queen, I'll engage."

"I should like to knock those fellows down just for a beginning," said Christopher, walking towards the tree; then elevating his gun, he shut his eyes, opened his mouth, and boldly pulled the trigger; when bang went the gun, and down went the gunner; while the parrots flew away.

"Hallo!" cried Tom, running up to his fallen cousin. "What is the matter, Kit?"

"Goodness me! I'm afraid I'm shot in the shoulder," said Christopher, rising, and looking as pale as a cockatoo. "Leastwise, not shot exactly, but wounded with the handle of the gun. I do believe that is a bad instrument, after all, Tom; and I will make Bilks take it back. I never felt anything like it."

"You did not hold it properly, Kit: it is no wonder it kicked. Look here; press it tightly to your shoulder, next time; thus," said Tom, aiming at a bird that was flying over their heads. The gun snapped, whereupon Tom tried it again and again, with similar result; and at length he discovered that there was no charge in it. Christopher stoutly declared that he had loaded both barrels, nor would he be convinced to the contrary; though it was evident that he had put two charges in one barrel, which partly accounted for his knock-down blow. As he declared he would not fire the thing again, they hid it in a hollow log, and away they went; Christopher agreeing to pick up the game, and carry the bag, which he said he should enjoy quite as much as shooting, in fact, a great deal more, for his gun was undoubtedly a kicker, and not to be trusted.

Presently a flock of king parrots lighted on a splendid gum tree, at the sight of which Christopher was nearly overcome by wonder and admiration. "My stars, Tom!" he exclaimed, "what would Sophy and Lizzie Whiffin say to such a magnificent collection of 'pretty Pollies!' I should think there are at least five hundred pounds' worth of birds in that tree, Tom, at

West-end prices. Bless me! I never did see such a grand sight. All the stuffed birds in London would not make such a display as that. It seems a thousand pities to fire at them, though I suppose it is the best way to catch them. I wonder if any of them can speak English?"

"We shall see directly," said Tom, raising his gun, and firing, when down plumped two fine birds, screaming in shot parrot style, while their late companions in the tree set up a screeching chorus. Christopher rushed up, and seized the fallen birds,—which were only winged,—and immediately he was joining in the general screeching; for the parrots seized him with their pincer-like beaks, and he could not shake them off, until Tom wrung their necks. Two of Christopher's fingers were badly lacerated; but Tom bound them up with a strip from his handkerchief; while he assured the wounded youth, that it was nothing when he was used to it. Christopher, however, was evidently undesirous of getting used to that very questionable sort of sport; for throughout the day he never again ventured to handle a bird, until he had thoroughly "taken the bite out of him"—as he called it—with the heel of his boot.

In two hours Tom had shot as many parrots as Christopher could cram into their game bag; so they retraced their steps homeward, calling for the discarded gun on the way. As they approached the Hall, Dora, Kate, and Polly came tripping over the lawn to welcome them, and to inquire what sort of sport they had had. Christopher felt chagrined when, on showing his wounded fingers, his fair cousins laughed, as though parrot bites were funny jokes. Polly, however, promised to make him two finger-stalls, and farther promised to save the feathers from the parrots, for him to send home to his sister Sophy.

When he reached the Hall, his aunt, who was very soft-hearted, pitied and petted him as tenderly as if he were her soldier son just returned from the wars, with two wooden legs.

After tea Christopher walked out towards the stockyard, where Cousin Tom and the stockman were busy doctoring a cow that had got staked.

"That's a fine milker," remarked Christopher, with a knowing look at the cow, as Tom walked up to him. "I should say she is a valuable beast, Tom."

Tom smiled, and quietly replied, "She is a fat cow, and that is all you can say in her favour; but I call her a clumsy brute,

and she is far from being a good milker. She will make good beef; and that's all she is fit for."

"Dear me! Now I should have thought she was a prime cow. She looks nice and sleek, and has got very pretty horns. I must learn a little more about animals, now I am up here. Pray tell me what are the characteristics of a fine cow, Tom."

Tom smiled again at the pompous style of his simple cousin; and replied, "I will tell you the good points of a cow in rhyme, Kit, as I heard it from an old Yorkshireman, who said he read it in the 'Farmer's Magazine.'"

"A GOOD COW.

"She's long in her face, she's fine in her horn,
She'll quickly get fat without oil-cake or corn,
She's clean in her jaws and full in her chine,
She's heavy in flank and wide in her loin,
She's broad in her ribs and long in her rump,
A straight and flat back, without sign of a hump,
She's wide in her hips and calm in her eyes,
She's fine in her shoulders and thin in her thighs,
She's light in her neck and small in her tail,
She's wide in her breast and good at the pail;
She's fine in her bone and silky of skin;
She's a grazier's without and a butcher's within."

CHAPTER XXXII.

CHRISTOPHER escorts his fair Cousins to Kickadingo on Horseback, and returns Home much faster than he went. His involuntary Flight over a five-barred Gate.

"WHAT sort of a rider are you, Christopher?" asked Uncle Nicholas next morning, as he was taking his customary walk in the shrubbery after breakfast.

"Well, I can scarcely say, uncle; for I have not had much experience in the saddle; in fact, I have not had a fair trial on horseback. I rode a Dutch mule at St. Helena, a very rough brute, and I have ridden donkeys on Blackheath several times; but I never was on a real horse, and I should very much like to learn to sit in the saddle well; for when I see my cousins racing across the paddocks on their pretty nags, I feel like a tomtit besmeared with birdlime amongst a flock of goldfinches; and I am afraid they will think I am wanting in pluck. I should like to learn to ride, uncle, if you can lend me a safe horse."

"So you shall learn, my boy, and it is very essential knowledge in this country. A man in the bush who cannot ride is as useless as a blind soldier, or a one-armed sailor. You shall learn to ride, my boy," continued Uncle Nick, with a goodnatured smile. "I have a capital old stager in the paddock; just the beast for you to practise upon, because he is as free from tricks as a wooden rocking-horse, though he may be not quite so easy. Old Gimlet was my favourite gig-horse for many years, though I don't work him now. I know you will not ride him fast or very far; and you are a light weight, so your work won't hurt him. He is the steadiest brute in the district, and was never known to bolt or buckjump; and I'll warrant he would not shy if he met a gang of dancing Chinamen beating gongs, especially if they got on the blind side of him. Pundits have agreed that blindness promotes boldness, on the principle, I suppose, that what the eye does not see, the heart does not fear. I dare say jockeys and huntsmen would

denounce that *dictum* as highly dangerous, though it is evident they do not usually set a high value on their own necks. At all events, blindness has cured Gimlet from shying at objects on his off side; so I'll warrant that eye, Kit; and you must watch the other one. He is certainly not a beauty; but that does not matter a bit. Beautiful creatures are not always most trustworthy. Remember that axiom, Kit, my boy."

"Yes, uncle," said Christopher, who was so excited at the prospect of his ride on such a safe beast, that he would have promised to remember anything, and would probably have forgotten it the next minute. Away he hastened into the paddock with Alick the coachman, to catch the steed which had been so strongly recommended for his amiability. Old Gimlet was caught without any trouble,—being old and silly, as Alick remarked,—and was led up to the stable yard to be rubbed down, which he much needed, for his coat was as dirty as a door-mat. Christopher was certainly not struck with the beauty of the beast, which had a "lean and hungry look," and a head as big as a butter tub. But beauty was a minor consideration, as Christopher remarked; and though Gimlet had only one eye, it was evident, from his walking straight up to the corn bin, that he could see his way with that one; and horses with two eyes are not expected to do more by reasonable owners.

It happened that Dora, Kate, and Polly were going to Kick-adingo that morning to do a little shopping; and as Tom wanted to go into the Bush with the stockman to drive in a bullock to slaughter, he could not escort his sisters; so Uncle Nick asked Christopher to take that post of honour, at which he felt as elated as a young soldier on his first parade. The girls, too, appeared delighted at the prospect of having a little fun on the road with their Cockney cousin, whom they had before discovered to be as ignorant of the simplest routine of country life, as he was presumptuous and conceited. Very soon, the young ladies were arrayed in their flowing riding habits, and their coquettish little feathery hats; while their mettlesome nags were pawing the ground in their impatience to be cantering along with their fair burdens.

Christopher spread his tiger-skin railway wrapper over the saddle to prevent chafing, and nervously mounted his tall bony steed. After some instructions from their father, and some cautions from their mother, off started the girls, with Christopher in the rear; and soon they were jogging along the high

road to Kickadingo. Out of consideration for their cousin's quivering nerves, and at his earnest solicitation, they soon curbed their horses into a walk ; so it was mid-day when they reached the township.

They alighted at a general store, hooked their horses to the verandah posts, and the ladies were soon making purchases with the devotion natural to the sex. Whether they were desirous of being rid of the quizzical oversight of their cousin—for what have boys to do with girls' little wants?—or whether they were merely anxious to save time, I am not certain ; but they requested Christopher, “like a good boy,” to go to the post-office for their letters and newspapers, and to make haste back to them.

Pleased at being useful to the ladies,—as every young gentleman should be,—and proud of his equestrian success thus far, Christopher left the store whip in hand, mounted Ginlet on the proper side, as cleverly as a squatter, and steadily ambled through the long dusty street to the post-office ; slyly exerting his utmost efforts to make every beholder believe that he was as daring a horseman as ever hunted kangaroos over a broken country, or chased a bushranger in the dark.

There were a good many letters, and more than a week's newspapers, in the post-office, for Cockleorum Hall ; so Christopher tied the whole into a bundle, and strapped it to the saddle before him, then turned his horse's head homewards. By way of showing off a bit, and convincing the crowd, who were gazing at him from under the post-office portico, that he was not afraid of his big horse, and in full confidence that the patient brute would not kick, he struck him a smart blow on the hip bone with the whip handle ; but had no sooner done so, than he began to regret his temerity.

Blackstone says, “Every wrong has its remedy.” I have no doubt his proposition is correct ; and if it were more generally kept in mind, it would save a vast amount of misery. Many little men have suddenly mounted the “high horse,” in a metaphorical sense ; and becoming light-headed with their elevation, have forgotten to exercise the modicum of common sense they formerly possessed, and have degenerated into petty tyrants. The conscious possession of power has made them proud and overbearing, and they have dealt cruel blows on the hips of their unlucky subordinates ; or, in other words, have wantonly hurt the feelings of men vastly superior in mind, though in humbler positions ; on the same unmanly principle that in-

cited Christopher to beat his superannuated old steed,—viz., a belief that he would not kick.

It is not always that judgment so promptly follows wrong acts as it did in that case. When Gimlet received the blow, he acknowledged it with a horse sigh; and though he had not the least idea of revenge in his big head, his rider was as sorely punished as all such little Neros deserve to be, for similar savage blows on helpless hips or hearts. The old horse probably regarded the blow on his bone as a hint that he was required to return home a little faster than he had come to town. Perhaps he felt anxious, too, to get back to his clover paddock, and to rid himself of the uneasy load on his back, and the pair of heels that were continually drumming his fleshless ribs. Of course, these are mere conjectures as to the reflections of the animal, though there is reasonable ground for the hypothesis; for Gimlet whisked his tail, tossed his head, gave a loud grunt, and changed his pace from a shuffle into a jolting jog-trot, which shook Christopher out of the stirrups in a second, and made him bound and rebound on his slippery seat, as though he were made of india-rubber and petticoat springs. At the same time he heard a loud guffaw chorus from the crowd at the post-office, which was—to say the least—not comforting. A dreadful sense of danger took away all his self-possession, and his self-respect also; for he felt that he would gladly have exchanged lot and station with a mangy monkey on the back of a French poodle, in an itinerant organ-grinder's service.

"Whoa! whoa, my boy! whoa, Gimlet!" cried Christopher, in mollifying tones, to the trotting brute; at the same time he seized the saddle with both hands, while the bridle slipped down to the horse's ears. "Wh—wh—whoa, Gim—Gim—Gimlet! Wh—wh—whoa, old boy!" groaned Christopher, in an agony of terror and shame, as the old horse jolted along the main street, utterly regardless of the rider's cries. He would have stopped instantly, had the rein been drawn ever so gently; for he had a mouth as soft as a kid glove; but words, either gentle or harsh, were as inoperative as winks on his blind side, for the simple reason that he was as deaf as a bronze horse; which fact Christopher was not aware of. Probably the simple old animal mistook his rider's frantic writhings in the saddle for endeavours to stimulate him to extra exertion; for he evidently put his best leg foremost, and jogged along at the rate of seven miles an hour, which was his maximum pace. If the best of riders consider the jog-trot of a gig-horse objectionable, the

reader may estimate what Christopher thought of it. His chief hope was in the strength of the girths ; for he clung to the saddle with the tenacity of a drowning sailor ; and he shudderingly reflected on what trifles a man's life sometimes depends. One defective buckle might cost him his neck. Great was his grief that he had come in his Oxford shoes instead of his Wellington boots, as he felt his trowsers working upwards, leaving his sparrow-built legs above his tartan socks as bare as a Highland-man's. To add to his distress, the bundle of letters and papers became loosened, and as he dared not relax his hold of the saddle for an instant, he had no power to save the correspondence from descending in a shower on the dusty street.

Jog, jog, jog, jog, went Gimlet down the long busy thoroughfare, past the store where his cousins were standing, watching him, and blushing with shame at the ludicrous figure he presented to the grinning denizens of Kickadingo. "Christopher ! Kit, Kit ! stop for us !" cried the young ladies, with united voices. "We are quite ready ; stop for us, Christopher."

But Christopher could not have stopped, had the Queen herself stood at the store door, and commanded him to kneel and be knighted. He scarcely even dared to look round, lest he should fall off his giddy perch. Onward he went ; jog, jog, jog, seven miles an hour, till his bones rattled like a bag of clothes-pegs. Up hill and down hill, with no variation in the rasping pace, and no alleviation of his dread lest the girths should break, or the saddle slip round. Happily for him, he was unconscious that his cousins were riding after him, laughing till their merry eyes overflowed with tears of fun. One of them was carrying Christopher's hat, which had jolted off his head ; another carried his riding whip and his tiger-skin wrapper, which he had dropped in despair ; and a third carried the bundle of letters and papers, and one of his Oxford shoes, which had shaken off. The young ladies kept within sight of him, still at a prudent distance, lest they should make the old horse try to increase his speed and tumble down ; for they knew he was what is termed rather "groggy."

Away went Gimlet, jog, jog, jolt, jolt, and not a fraction of his efforts did he relax until he came close up to the outer gate of the Cockleton domain, when he made a dead halt, and shot Christopher clear over his head on the carriage way, where he was lying all of a heap, like a bundle of old clothes, when his cousins came cantering up to his rescue.

He lost a little skin from his nose and knuckles, but received

no fractures by his fall. He had previously received a woful chafing, but that of course he was too modest to mention to his smirking cousins, who picked him up and dusted his jacket, then helped him to the Hall. Aunt Cockle sympathized with him, as usual ; and, at her earnest solicitation, he anointed himself with goose-grease, and went to bed.

The young ladies retired to their chamber some hours afterwards ; and on the way thither they prevailed on their mother to allow them to have a peep at their unlucky cousin, who was snoring loudly, with his damaged nose poking from under his tasseled nightcap like a ripe prickly pear. He snored on, unconscious of their antics around his couch, or their merry giggles at the recollection of his involuntary trot and his flight over the gate. Among the many compliments which were passed on his interesting appearance, Kate archly remarked, " That he only wanted a lemon in his mouth, and a little parsley on his pillow, to exactly resemble the calf's head which Trotter, the pork butcher, exhibited in his window on Christmas Eve."

CHAPTER XXXIII.

A SUMMARY of Christopher's little Sayings and Doings at Cockleton. With his graphic Letters to his Friend Launcelot Whiffin, and to his Sister, embodying his altered Views of the Character of his Relatives, and other interesting Matters.

A FAITHFUL chronicle of the sayings and doings of Christopher during his six weeks' stay at Cockleorum Hall would be perhaps less interesting than a record of the vagaries of "Tim Bobbin," or any other clown; so I shall not even attempt to write it. I purpose merely to take a cursory glance at a few of his freaks and eccentricities, in order to give the reader an idea of the way he obeyed his father's injunction, and picked up colonial experience, as well as to justify his worthy relatives in forming an unfavourable opinion of their wayward young guest.

On one occasion, while at a pic-nic party with his cousins and several other ladies and gentlemen, he selected an ant hill for a seat, and was carving a pigeon pie, and at the same time retailing some of Mr. Presto's comicalities, when he suddenly jumped up, dropped the dish, and shrieked out that a thousand centipedes were biting his legs; then ran into a scrub close by, to rid himself of his tormentors. Meanwhile the company screamed with laughter at his ridiculous dilemma, and the sudden check to his rapid flow of facetiæ. On his return to the party, one of the guests condolingly reminded him that rich plumaged parrots were sometimes shot to make soup; and that the best of men were liable to scrapes, and would exhibit feeling under certain circumstances. Then, he added,—as Christopher stood rubbing himself, in moody doubt whether to laugh or cry,—“If the Bishop of Exeter, or Mr. Bright, the Quaker, had sat on that ant hill, it is probable they would have jumped up, and danced as ludicrously as you did.”

At another time Christopher added to his notoriety and his scars in the following manner. Early one morning he got up and went for a bath; but instead of walking to the river, as any

rational man would have done, he plunged into Farmer Stump's water-hole, well knowing that it was a reserve for culinary purposes. A short time afterward Sally Stump went to fill her kettle for breakfast, and was naturally scared at seeing a red puffing face above the water. She dropped her kettle, and ran home, and acquainted her father, who, incensed beyond measure at the shameful defilement of his water, and in ignorance of the rank of the intruder, unchained his dog Pincher, which severely bit Christopher, and sent him racing home as bare as a black fellow.

On another occasion he was terribly alarmed at the appearance of a tame emu, belonging to one of his uncle's tenants, which stalked up to him as he was crossing a paddock late one night, after a furtive visit to the Blue Pig groggery on the river bank. He hastily fled from the supposed phantom, and got bogged in a lagoon, from which, after much struggling, he extricated himself, and reached the Hall at midnight, almost speechless from the combined effects of fear, cold, and colonial ale. When, next morning, he told his aunt that "he had seen the devil," she quietly remarked that she was not surprised at it; for Satan was always pretty near to those who were willing to do his bidding. She then told him an awful story—which she declared to be true—of a profligate young man, who dreamt one night that the devil had dragged him into a deep hole on his father's farm, and smothered him. He told his dream to a wicked companion on the following day, and he ridiculed the idea of the devil's existence. The next night the unfortunate young man was returning home tipsy, and fell into the very hole that he had dreamt he saw the devil emerge from. "His body is now lying in ——— burial ground," continued Aunt Cockle; "but where his poor soul is, it is too awful to think of for a moment."

Through his excessive pusillanimity, Christopher was well-nigh losing his life in the bush. I will but briefly allude to the semi-tragical event. One afternoon he was returning homeward from Kickadingo, and, in his silly dread of bush-rangers, he turned off the road at the appearance of two bearded gentlemen in the distance, and was unable to find his way back to the high road again. After wandering about in a circle for several hours he climbed a tall tree, to see if he could by that means discover his position: in doing so he dislodged a hornets' nest, and was severely stung by the spiteful insects. Hastily sliding down the rough tree, his clothes were torn, and

his flesh was badly grazed. He passed a miserable night, and was intensely frightened at seeing a kangaroo bound past him,—the first he had seen in the bush. Next day he was found by his cousins,—who had scoured the neighbourhood in search of him,—with his face puffed up like a boiled leg of pork, and blotched all over by hornet stings. He was dragged by them out of a hollow log, into which he had crawled to die, and was taken back to the Hall with his fractured garments covered by his cousin Kate's riding skirt.

A few days after that mishap, a large party of friends were dining at the Hall; and Christopher procured a bottle of eau-de-cologne, and was proceeding to sprinkle the guests *à la* "Waggle;" when he was soundly rebuked by Uncle Nick for his breach of good manners; and was likewise threatened with a horsewhipping by a young gentleman whose sister he had first sprinkled.

The foregoing specimens of his folly and weakness will suffice in this place. His good uncle and aunt affectionately reasoned with him from time to time on his lamentable want of manly dignity and decision, and especially they warned him of the danger of his unmistakeable fondness for the bottle. His cousins, after vainly trying to discover any latent signs of rational consistency in his character, at length began to despise him for his repeated manifestations of imbecility, combined with a dogged self-will, a tricky disposition, and conceit that was intolerable. Although it was troublesome to the young ladies to preserve a stately reserve, they saw the necessity for doing so, in order to keep their eccentric cousin from taking unwarrantable liberties. As for Tom, he said he had no patience with a man who had no more common sense or self-control than a child; and withal he had a sort of jealous contempt for his cousin's overweening conceit of his superior scholastic attainments, simply because he was educated in England. Tom's Australian spirit was aroused too, when he heard the silly young Cockney contemptuously underrating the academical institutions of the colony.

Christopher's private opinion of his relatives, and the value he set upon their friendship, may be seen by a perusal of the following letter to his late pot companion, Launcelot Whiffin.

"COCKLEORUM HALL.

"MY DEAR WHIFFY,

"JUST try to fancy yourself shut up for six weeks in the

dead-house at Guy's, with half a dozen stiff subjects, as you doctors call them; and you may form a faint idea of my misery in this place, hedged in, as I am, by nuisances of all sorts, male and female, and as destitute of comfort as an unfortunate work-house pauper. Uncle Nick is a regular old donkey, rough shod, though he is decidedly the best of the batch. Aunt is an intolerable old croaker: she is always pestering me with moral maxims and home-made physic, or basting me with goose-grease. The girls are horribly proud, quizzical, and as sour as native currants. They are always watching my movements, and making game of me in a sort of mock dignified style, which I dare say they think is very witty; but in my opinion it shows their ignorance, and I pity the poor uncivilized young women. But what can you expect from bush-bred girls, who have never seen anything but bullocks? As for Tom,—or Tomboy, as I call him,—he is a downright savage; and, like his sisters, without a spark of sympathy or soft feeling in his nature. He fancies that because he can shoot parrots, ride a horse, crack a stock-whip, or hunt a kangaroo better than I can,—that he is really superior to me in general wisdom; whereas he could scarcely translate a page of Homer, if you were to offer him a gross of cabbage-tree hats for it. In short, they are all cannibals together; and I am afraid they will eat me for breakfast some morning, if they run short of bandicoots and cobbera.

“These things are facts, Whiffy, positive as cab-fares; so I am going to invent an excuse for decamping in a day or two, while I can do so with a sound scalp. I dare say my friend Slyver will be in Sydney by this time: though I have not heard from him since I came here. Just fancy, old fellow, my wretchedly slow style of existence. Twice a day I must go down on my marrow-bones to family prayer. On Sunday I have to walk to church in the morning, come home to a cold dinner, walk to church again in the afternoon, and talk catechism or sing psalms all the evening till bedtime. Isn't that awfully slow? Then they are all teetotallers here, not a drop of anything in the house stronger than cold tea or skim milk; and if I smuggle a bottle of comfort from the Blue Pig, aunt smells it in a minute,—for she has a nose like a fox-hound,—and I get a solemn warning, or a lecture, as long as my leg, on intemperance. Pshaw! I hate the place and everybody in it. That's the plainest way of putting it; and I wish I had drowned all my letters to Old Nick, (or Uncle Nicholas, but it's all the same,) or I wish I had never come near the place; then I should not have

been pained by knowing that I had such a lot of barbarians for my relatives.

"I had a letter from Sam Shicer last week. He is 'flaring up' in Melbourne; but will soon be in Sydney, to dazzle some of the dull minds there; and I hope to see the 'old brick,' for I am dying for want of a 'spree,' and my heart is as mouldy as an old boot, as my man Tim would say. I am making lots of money, Whiffy. That's the only consolation I have in life, and I am doing it without working, or playing, or gambling. That's funny, you will say; but I am doing the thing, and no mistake. I cannot make you comprehend the process exactly; for you, of course, don't know the way the oracle is worked on this luminous side of the world. I am not investing my capital in houses or corner allotments, as Shicer talked about. By the by, we were inclined to take a sight at Sam when he told us of a building site in Melbourne selling for £45,000; but I have seen the identical spot with my own eyes, and it's nothing but black dirt mixed with brick dust and bits of bottles; there's not a speck of gold to be seen on it. I have seen some of the men who handled the money, too; and they are merely mild-looking gentlemen.

"I will explain my doings in a few words, though I don't think you will understand them. You must cross the line before you can cut your wisdom teeth. I am judiciously keeping my money moving, in the same way that you have seen a juggler spin a lot of golden balls in the air without dropping any of them; or, as my friend Thugman remarks, keeping my capital floating; and so long as I do that I am as right as the buoy at the Nore. (Can't you see how my wit is sharpened since I came here, Whiffy?)

"I will give you an instance of my trading. Just after I left Sydney I bought half a cargo of Scotch flag-stones, that is to say, my agent bought them for me. Of course, I know nothing about such things. I am not a mason. Yesterday he wrote me word that he had sold the stones at a good profit to a first-rate mark, and advised me to go heavily into horse-beans at once, as they are likely to move up, owing to a large lot of fodder going down in a gale in the Black Sea, and the fly or weevil having cleared off all the old stocks of beans on hand. All I have to do in these transactions is simply to sign my name to a cheque, or what they call a bill, at three or four months, which my agent turns into cash as cleverly as Professor Presto made pancakes out of a hat full of nothing,—and the profit is all mine, of course.

"I have not said a syllable to the 'old bloke' here about my speculations; for I know I should be bored with advice till my head ached, or till I got savage enough to knock him down. Then we should probably come to high words.

"You remember old Rouse used to tell us that Dido, Queen of Carthage, bought as much land as she could compass with a cow's hide. What did she do but cut the hide into small thongs; so she made it compass enough ground to build Carthage upon. That was a 'knowing dodge,' as the saying is; but it is nothing to some of the dodges out here. I was told of a man who some time ago bought for a cask of rum land enough to found half a score of African cities.

"I cannot write any more now, Whiffy, my boy; for I am as dull as a cast-iron door-scraper, as Ben Bladders used to say, and that old muffin bell has just rung for supper. Ugh! supper, indeed! Stewed peaches and chocolate, or honey cakes and home-made jam, that's all. What would I not give for two or three devilled kidneys, and a pint of Evans's prime half-and-half; or a plate of scoloped oysters, and a glass of toddy, with a comic song over it! The only comical things I hear here are the gigantic kingfishers, (*Dacelo Gigantea*,) commonly called 'laughing jackasses,' a flock of which perch on an old gum-tree in the paddock at sunrise and at sunset, and laugh like young students.

"Pity your wretched 'old chum,' Whiffy, and tell all the 'bricks' and 'loose fish' of your acquaintance to take an awful warning by my fate; and if they should come to this country, not to bother themselves with letters to slow-going relatives, if they value a Briton's glorious birthright, liberty.

"No more at present from the miserable wretch,

"CHRISTOPHER COCKLE.

"P.S.—What is the use of all my money to me? I am as low-spirited as a fellow who has not got a farthing to buy a second-hand pipe. I would give a guinea this very minute for a bottle of old Tom and a night's lodging in your bone-house, with a terrier to keep off the rats.

"P.S. 2.—I wish you could send me a hogshead of laughing gas."

After supper, Christopher returned to his room in a sulky mood, and wrote the following epistle to his sister; and thus

vented off a little more pent-up spite and mawkish sentiment :—

“MY DARLING SISTER,

“I WOULD give all I am worth for a little of your tender, loving sympathy just now ; for I feel wretchedly downcast, and very poorly, through drinking sour milk for supper. I seem to prize you now more than I ever did, dear ; and I am very sorry I used to tease you, when I was a boy, and did not know better. I find the climate of this country does not agree with me at all, dear ; and—*inter nos*—the inmates of Cockleorum Hall are not so agreeable as I fancied they were when I last wrote to you. Pa used to say, ‘To know a person, you must live with him.’ I want you to burn my last letter, Sophy ; for there are many miscalculations in it. You know I had only been here a few days when I wrote that, and had seen nothing but smooth faces, and had heard nothing but honeyed words ; but my experience of six weeks has proved that I was greatly mistaken in my estimate of all my relatives,—my cousins especially. I foolishly thought the girls were angels, particularly Polly ; but I made a great mistake : they are no more like angels than a blind man’s cur is like your poodle.

“I am going to tell you a few things in confidence, Sophy ; but pray don’t mention what I say to a soul, especially to Lizzie. Mind that, dear. I used to think Cousin Polly a very pretty girl, and I began to like her, because she was so much like you ; in fact, I had a sort of notion,—this is strictly private, you know,—I had a faint idea of marrying her, and buying a farm ; for I thought she would make a tolerably good wife for the country, and I thought farming would agree with me, after I got used to it. So I began to study agriculture, and gathered a heap of knowledge of one sort and another : but I am sorry to say that, instead of assisting me in my researches, my relatives, one and all, discouraged me by laughing at my experiments, and predicting failure to all my plans.

“One day, while I was making a bargain with Mr. Sharp, a settler on the next estate to Cockleton, for a second-hand mowing machine, that ignoramus Tom came up, and jeeringly told me I had better buy a diving-bell, and go and live in it, to keep myself out of mischief. I turned quickly round to give him a sharp reply, and got my toe pinched in the machine. Would you believe it, dear ? when I got home, and complained of Tom, they all laughed at my mishap ; and Cousin Kate, in her sar-

castic style, asked me if I were trying if the mowing machine was sharp enough to cut my toe-nails or my corns ! I wish she had corns on her tongue, and an ugly wart on her nose, the impudent minx !

"It would take me too long to tell you everything, dear ; but I was going to tell you about Polly. Well, I used to pay attention to her ; and she knew very well I was trying to court her, though she made believe that she did not understand my little hints and sly winks. Last of all, I quietly popped the question to her, feeling quite sure she would jump at me, as the saying is ; when she tried, in various ways, to put me off with evasive nonsense. But I was determined not to be trifled with in that way ; so one day I plucked up all my manliness, and caught hold of her, to stop her from running away, and said I would not let her go till she had given me a straightforward answer. What do you think she said ? (Be sure you don't tell anybody, Sophy !) Why, after calling me a rude fellow, and spitefully ordering me to take my hands off her, she said she would not have such a green gosling for a husband, even if I owned all the houses in Hackney, as well as Winkle Terrace ; then, with a look almost sharp enough to cut my nose off, she strutted out of the room.

"You can fancy how vexed I felt, dear, and what a look of scorn I gave her in return. The idea of a mere bush-bred girl refusing my hand ! I can hardly believe it myself. But I find I don't love her a bit, Sophy ; in fact, I hate her. I hate all the family : for they are proud, beggarly upstarts—in short, a lot of donkeys. What I have had to put up with since I have been here, no tongue can tell but my own. I am sure, if I had not had plenty of patience, I should have knocked Tom down a dozen times, though he is taller and stouter than myself, and prides himself on knowing how to knock down a bullock with one bullet.

"I know you will sympathize with me, Sophy dear, and that is why I unbosom my sorrows freely to you ; but mind you don't say anything to Pa about my trials and sufferings. I think I shall start for Sydney in a few days, and it is very likely I shall never come here again. Don't write to any of our cousins, Sophy ; they are not worthy of your notice, let alone friendship such as yours. Ladies, indeed ! Phoo ! I never saw such ladies ! If you were here, you would see them every morning dressed in rough brown holland, with brooms and rolling-pins, and other servants' tools, in their hands, doing all sorts of

drudgery about the house, such as you would faint even to think of. And in the afternoon you might see them out riding, and looking as proud as if they had never handled a broomstick all their lives. Pshaw! I hate such beggarly pride! And yet those plebeian ignoramuses will presume to lecture me about consistency of conduct, and dignity of character, and all that sort of stuff and nonsense, as though I were a raw boy, who had never been to school, or mixed in refined society. I flatter myself I know twice as much as the whole family could teach me. Uncle is the best of the lot, certainly, but he is an ignorant ass. As for Aunt, she is an old frump, and doesn't know how to spell cabbage. But I won't waste ink by writing more about them. I despise them.

"Give my love to Lizzie, and tell her I have not forgotten her. I enclose a rosebud for her. She has studied the language of flowers, so will know what it means. I begin to see clearly that I made a great mistake in fancying the Australian girls were all handsome, and so very clever; but there is no mistake about some of them being very impudent. Just fancy that gawky girl Polly calling me a 'green gosling!' It's a wonder I did not slap her face.

"Give my love to Ma and Pa, Grandma, and Uncle Peter, with a thousand kisses for yourself. So no more at present from your devoted but down-hearted brother,

"CHRISTOPHER COCKLE."

CHAPTER XXXIV.

CHRISTOPHER'S Departure from Cockleton. Meets with Miss Julia Dove-skin on board Steamer; and enters into a brotherly Compact with her. His Introduction to her Aunt, Mrs. Captain Gorger, and their happy domestic Arrangement.

By the next day's post Christopher received several letters from Sydney. The first one he opened was from his banker, calling attention to his overdrawn account, which rather astonished him; for by his own calculation he should have had more than one hundred and fifty pounds to his credit. After pondering over the matter for some time, he sagaciously concluded that such a difference clearly showed inaccuracy on the one side or the other, and he resolved to see about it.

The next letter he looked at was from his agent, advising that he had closed with Messrs. Hookey and Son for a heavy parcel of horse-beans—the first sample in the market—on very favourable terms. He was sanguine that in a few weeks he would be able to place them at a figure which would leave a handsome margin of profit. Mr. Thugman begged to enclose bills at three, four, and five months, in favour of Hookey and Son, for acceptance: also two blank bills for signature. The purpose for which he wanted them he very lucidly explained; so that his flexible client could see at a glance that it was for his own special benefit. Mr. Thugman's letter also contained a good deal of jargon about the markets in general, especially referring to horse fodder and bread stuffs. He was happy to say, that horse feed was looking up steadily; but he alluded to the downward tendency of the flour market in terms as lugubrious as though a reduction in the price of the "staff of life" was a calamity as serious as a famine. He begged Christopher's acceptance of a box of Moreton-Bay pine-apples, which he had forwarded by that day's steamer, also a few good books, which he trusted would afford Christopher pleasure and profit in the perusal. The writer concluded with a solemn re-assurance of his entire devotedness to Christopher's interests, and a hope that he was improving his time and talents in the bosom of his worthy uncle's amiable family.

Christopher's heart was touched by the fervid expressions of esteem and the uncommon generosity of his agent; and muttering that Thugman was "a first-rate fellow," he opened the third letter, which was from Mr. Shicer, who had arrived in Sydney, and was anxious to see Christopher as soon as possible. His letter stated that he had met with a gentleman who was anxious to sell his cattle-station on the Billybong; and if Christopher would hasten down to Sydney, he would be in time to secure a tremendous bargain; for Mr. Dumps was compelled to sell at any sacrifice to meet pressing engagements. In fact, Mr. Shicer had an idea that Mr. Dumps intended "to bolt," or he would not offer his cattle for but little more than the price of their hides and horns.

Christopher rubbed his hands at the cheering prospect of such a decided bargain; but he had not a moment's compassionate thought for Mr. Dumps's creditors. "Buy in the cheapest market," was a maxim of political economy which he always took for granted. He felt not a little flattered at receiving three important commercial missives in one day, and began to feel—as he expressed it—up to his eyes in business, and to rejoice that he could drive an extensive trade with so little personal exertion. He laughed in his sleeve at those old fogies who maintain that steady personal attention is essential in all business ramifications, while he so clearly saw the way to fortune without bothering his head at all about details.

He at once sat down, and replied to the letters; and, after doing so, he informed his relatives that important business required his presence in Sydney immediately. He expressed regret that he was obliged to leave them so abruptly; but he must depart on the morrow. His uncle and aunt were really grieved and surprised at his sudden decision; but they failed to elicit from him a satisfactory reason for it. The silent looks of his cousins eloquently spoke their delight at the prospect of his early departure; for they all endorsed Polly's opinion, that he was a perfect plague, and a source of continual annoyance to the peace of their united little family circle.

I need not detail the long conference between Christopher and his uncle that evening, nor tell all the good advice his kind relative gave him, which he listened to in sullen silence, and evidently valued it less than he would have done the counsel of Shicer, or any other of his glib-tongued associates.

Next morning Christopher left Cockleorum Hall, with his duggage and his gun; not less rejoiced at being released from

the restraint of his cousins' overawing propriety, than they were rejoiced at being freed from his idle pranks and slangy conversation.

Alick, the groom, drove him to Kickadingo, and saw him safely into the mail-coach. The only occurrence worthy of note on his land journey was the upsetting of the coach, through a hind wheel coming off, while descending a gully. Christopher received a few bruises, and lost his gun, which he had given to a black fellow to hold, while he went to wash the dust off his face in a neighbouring creek. On his return to the coach he found that Bingi had run away with the gun; and as no one could tell into which part of the bush he had gone, it was, of course, hopeless to run after him; and, as the man was naked, there was no possibility of describing him, except in general terms, though Christopher shrewdly suspected he was an old friend of the coachman's.

On the following day Christopher was again on board the "Churnaway" steamer, *en route* for Sydney. As the vessel steamed down the Budgery river, he strutted up and down the deck with a lofty sense of his own importance; proudly imagining that he *must* be known to all on board as one of the wealthy Calabashites, and an extensive Sydney speculator. By the way, it is a constant conceit of "new chums" that they are as much esteemed as new-laid eggs.

From time to time he glanced furtively at a smartly-dressed young damsel, who sat under the awning on the quarter-deck, reading an illustrated paper. There was an interesting something he could not explain in the lady's look which irresistibly attracted him, as ever and anon he met her eyes turned full upon him with the tender expression of a wounded swan. "Whoever could she be? Was she travelling alone? or were either of those gentlemen on the paddle-box her husband or brother?"—were questions which he asked himself, without receiving an answer. His organ of wonder being aroused, his fancy soon pictured a host of romantic improbabilities in connexion with the unknown lady; and, ere long, he had more than half persuaded himself that she had actually fallen in love with him at first sight; for, peep at her when he would, he observed her eyes following him with a love-languishing gaze which none but a blind man could have mistaken. He felt that he would give a trifle to know if she were under the protection of either of the gentlemen before alluded to. He would not venture to speak to her, until he had satisfied himself on that head, as he had heard

of officious "young *gents*" being kicked by surly husbands or big brothers. Presently his doubts were removed; for all the gentlemen descended to the saloon, for noon-day refreshers, without noticing the young lady further than casually glancing at her as they passed; so he resolved to speak to her as soon as he could find a pretext for doing so, or could summon courage enough to do it without any pretext whatever. He did not wait long for an opportunity; for by and by the lady dropped her illustrated paper on the deck, whereupon Christopher picked it up, and handed it to her, bowing obsequiously as he did so.

"I am exceedingly obliged to you, Sir," said the young lady, with a smile and a glance which went to Christopher's heart at once.

"Don't mention it, Ma'am,—a—a—hem—it's a fine morning, Ma'am."

"Delightful, indeed, Sir: quite an Italian day," said the young lady, with another smile sweeter than the last, which made Christopher's blood tingle from his toes to the tips of his ears. He blushed and bowed; and, not knowing what to say next, resumed his walk, sucking the silver top of his whip-handle, and wondering who the young lady could be, and contrasting her easy affability with the stately decorum of his frigid cousins at Cockleton.

The steamer continued to paddle swiftly along, and in an hour or two put to sea; when she encountered a brisk head wind, and a rough sea, and began to toss about after the manner of steamers in general, under such circumstances. Christopher had been pondering how he should re-commence a conversation with the interesting stranger,—who was evidently some one of consequence, for she had travelled to Italy,—when a luminous idea suddenly gleamed upon him; so he stepped up to her, and politely lifting his hat, asked if she felt the motion of the ship.

"Thank you, Sir, I do feel it slightly; but I am quite an experienced sailor, having travelled a good deal with my Pa. Still, I think if I had a seat a little nearer the centre of the ship, it would be more agreeable."

"Will you allow me the honour of assisting you, Ma'am?" said Christopher, bowing with the *aplomb* of a French dancing-master.

"You are very kind indeed, Sir," replied the young lady, looking extremely grateful. She then arose, and leant on

Christopher's arm, while he gently led her to a seat near the paddle-box ; but she had scarcely seated herself, when her parasol was carried overboard by the wind, and with it her little silk reticule, which was attached to the handle. She uttered an interesting shriek, and exclaimed, "O, my bag!" At the same time she seized Christopher's hand, as though to prevent his jumping overboard after it ; and that tender pressure sent such a gush of sympathy into his heart that he felt for the moment he could have died for her bag.

"Hoy, Captain! Ease her, stop her! Turn astern! The lady's parasol's overboard," shouted Christopher, at the top of his voice.

"Hullo! what's the matter?" asked the Captain, looking down from his perch on the paddle-box.

"The lady's bag is blown overboard, Captain; ease her! Look, there it is, yonder, with a parasol tied to it. Stop her, Captain!"

"Ay, ay, Sir. We'll stop her, and pick it up next Friday night, on our down trip. I've got the bearings of it. Bluff head on the lee bow, Booby Island, bearing north and by south; allow three points for leeway: all right, Sir,—black bag with a string in its mouth, I shall know it."

Christopher was far from satisfied that it was all right; and he rather suspected the Captain was not serious, from the peculiar glance he gave to a dark personage, covered with engine grease, who was smoking his pipe under the bridge. "I am very, very sorry for your loss, Ma'am. The Captain ought to be ashamed of himself for not picking up your property, Ma'am. Captain Toffey would have lowered his long-boat in a minute to oblige a lady." Christopher sighed as he said that, and looked intensely compassionate.

"I believe some men have no souls," said the young lady in a dejected tone. Then she added, "I really do not know what I shall do; for unfortunately my purse was in my reticule, and"——

"Will you pardon me for taking the liberty of offering you the loan of my purse, Madam, until you recover your bag?" interrupted Christopher; at the same time forcing his *portemonnaie* into the yielding hands of the young lady, who exclaimed, with a look of gratitude worth two purses, "You are extremely generous, Sir; indeed, I am overwhelmed at meeting with such noble conduct in a stranger, especially in this country. I am sure I shall ever feel deeply grateful. I

need not apologize for asking your name, Sir, that I may be able to return your timely loan with many thanks."

Christopher's lips quivered with virtuous pride, as he produced his richly-enamelled case, and gave his card to the fair stranger, who smiled on it as sweetly as though it were a favoured *carte de visite*. "May I take the liberty of asking your name, Ma'am? I hope I am not giving offence."

The lady explained with a sigh that her card case was in her bag; then taking a letter from her pocket, she tore off a strip of paper, and wrote in rather a zigzag hand, which was doubtless owing to her trepidation, and the shaking of the ship,—

*"Miss Julia Doveskin,
Care of Mrs. Captain Gorger,
Cockatoo Lodge, Castlereagh Street."*

"Mrs. Captain Gorger is my aunt," lisped Miss Doveskin, with a bewitching look at Christopher, as she placed her address in his trembling hands. "She is a most devoted creature, though somewhat odd in her appearance, and at times a little eccentric in her manners; but her heart is in the right place, and that is the principal thing in a woman. I am sure she would like to see you, and thank you for your excessive kindness to me; so, if you will favour us with a call, we shall be delighted to see you. You *will* come, soon, won't you?" she added with a persuasive glance, which would have subdued the most stubborn old bachelor alive.

Christopher thanked her for the invitation, and promised to call on the morrow. Then, to break an awkward pause, he ventured to ask Miss Doveskin if she would take any refreshment. She hesitated for some time; but at length was persuaded to try a little brandy and water, as a panacea for squeamishness. When Christopher went below to order the compound, he ordered some for himself too; and its effect upon his courage and his conversational powers was soon apparent. Nor was its inspiriting influence less active with Julia. Her colour heightened, her eyes sparkled with spree; the action of her tongue was accelerated, and her whole manner became tinged with a jaunty-like confidence, which was winning in the extreme.

In an incredibly short time they were chatting as freely as if they had been next-door neighbours for years, and had enjoyed a daily *tête-à-tête* across their back palings. With an easy

fluency which showed the frankness of her nature, she gave him an outline of her history, which he listened to with intense interest, manifested in his open mouth.

She said she was the only daughter of an officer in the —th regiment of foot. Her poor Pa was killed by a blow from a pavior's rammer in an Irish riot. Her only brother, who was also a brave soldier, had distinguished himself in the same row by getting his ear bitten off, and his head cracked with a tool called a shillaleh. Soon afterwards he went raving mad, poor fellow!—it was supposed from the effects of the bite—and she was left, a sorrowing orphan, to the sole care of her aunt Gorger, whose husband was then a Captain in the Thames Merchant Navy. Some little time after Captain Gorger left London for Sydney in the Government Civil Service; and, as it was not convenient for Aunt to sail with him, she followed in about two years, taking Julia with her.

Unfortunately, Captain Gorger was drowned a little before their arrival, while playfully attempting to swim from the little island upon which he resided to the main land, one dark night, with his wearing apparel upon his head. Poor Aunt was thus left a widow, though not without means. She took the cottage that she now lives in, which she called after the name of her late husband's island home; and for some months she endured a grief which nobody saw. "Let me see," added Julia, musing, "I think it was poet Cowper who said,—

'Time, which spoils all things, will turn my kitten into a cat.'

So time has changed my dear aunt; and she no longer grieves for the fate of her brave, but unfortunate, husband."

Julia further told Christopher that, "young as she was, she had seen much of the world, and had moved a good deal in high circles. She liked travelling, was remarkably fond of soft scenery, and doted on poetry of the heart. She had been spending a few days on board her cousin's ship in the port they had just left; and would have gone to Hong Kong with him, only it would be cruel to leave her dear aunt alone."

When Julia paused for breath, Christopher, in return for her confidence, gave her a synopsis of his history, and his plans and prospects in coming to Australia. He incidentally alluded to his houses at Hackney; and gave an exaggerated account of his mercantile transactions in Sydney. He said he was the only son of wealthy parents; and had come out to see life, rather than to make money: though he was doing the two things at

once. He did not care a flip what the cost of a thing was, if he liked it ; but he did not like to be bothered. He explained at length the barbarous treatment he had received from his relatives at Cockleton, who, he said, were coarse-minded brutes ; and after an outburst of bitter invective against them, he went below for another glass of brandy and water.

Julia seemed intensely interested in his recital. She smiled when he spoke of his joys, and tried to weep when he pathetically described his sorrows and his trials. She frowned and made faces when he spoke of the heartless coldness of his cousins,—indeed, she had almost allowed her feelings to betray her into the use of expressions alike at variance with syntax and sobriety, when he mentioned his Cousin Polly with peculiar emphasis. To be brief, before the “Churnaway” reached Sydney, Christopher and his new friend had entered into a mutual compact to sympathize with each other in a brotherly and sisterly way, to soften each other’s sorrows, and to share each other’s joys,—in short, to cleave to each other with a pure, platonic, disinterested affection, which Julia explained was the only sort of love she loved.

By a strange coincidence, her brave brother was called Christopher ; and her lips crumpled up so temptingly, as she sued for permission to call Christopher by that endearing name, that he assured her, “’pon his honour,” he could not refuse her anything in the world. She squeezed his hand under her shawl, and tenderly told him that she would henceforward regard him as her poor insane brother, restored to her love again. He then claimed the privilege of calling her sister, and of using a brother’s freedom with her, which she joyfully ceded.

That interesting compact being settled, they sat and talked about all sorts of pleasant things ; and exchanged pure love looks without being conscious that they were overlooked and laughed at by many of their fellow-passengers, and by the sooty-faced stoker under the bridge, whose comments I refrain from recording.

When the steamer reached Sydney, Christopher assisted Julia into a cab ; and, as he bade her adieu, she squeezed his hand, and said, “Good night, my dear brother,” in such a natural, sisterly manner, that he was irresistibly impelled to give her a brotherly salute ; so he leant his head into the cab, and kissed her tenderly ; then sped on his way to the Royal Hotel, with his breast full of emotions, as new as they were delightful to him.

"Charming Julia!" he soliloquized, as he rolled about in his bed that night, and revolved in his mind the stirring events of the day. "Darling girl!—so natural, unaffected, and free; and so deliciously soft in her manner. How pleased dear Sophy would be to see her! How glad she will be when I tell her that I have at last found some one here with a gentle feminine heart in her breast!—a heart surcharged with sympathy for another's woes, and as tender as a little canary bird's,—without a particle of my proud cousin's starchy propriety or rasping irony. No, no; there is no prudery or buckram about my sweet sister Julia,—the dear, gentle child of nature. By the by, I forgot to tell that disobliging Captain where to send her bag and umbrella, if he should pick them up on Friday night."

Christopher at length dropped off to sleep, and dreamed that he had jumped overboard from the "Churnaway," and was diving for Julia's bag, when a mermaid caught him by the coat-tails, and was dragging him "down, down, down, a thousand fathoms deep," through shoals of queer fish of a species unknown at Billingsgate, and masses of dank seaweed, which coiled about his head, and was choking him, when he awoke in a cold perspiration, and was conscious that he had been loudly shouting out, "Stop her! Turn astern!"

The following morning he called upon his banker; and, after closely examining what was to him a mystification of figures, he discovered that the cheques in favour of Mr. Slyver for £9. 10s. 0d. and £7. 7s. 0d., had been altered to £90. 10s. 0d. and £70. 7s. 0d.; from which little circumstance he argued that a great mistake had occurred somewhere. He at once wrote to Mr. Slyver, Bull's-Hide, Gunyah, asking him if he could remember to whom he paid the cheques, and begging his assistance to unravel the annoying mystery.

He next went to his agent, who was dreadfully shocked at the wickedness of the world in general, and at the fraud on his friend's cheques in particular. He said he always thought Mr. Slyver was a thorough gentleman, who would prefer death to dishonour any day; and the tender-hearted agent was almost affected to tears at the idea of the moral delinquency which the case suggested,—nay, positively evidenced.

Christopher disclaimed any intention to impugn the honour of Mr. Slyver for an instant; still he maintained that a serious mistake had occurred somewhere or other, by which he was a loser to the extent of £160; and in seeing about it he

hoped he should not in the least wound that gentleman's feelings.

Leaving his agent in a state of morbidly conscientious abstraction on his foremost topic of fireside talk, viz., the best way of reforming rogues by increasing their facilities for profiting by the example of honest men,—Christopher went straightway to Mr. Shicer's lodgings. That gentleman was out ; so Christopher left his card, and promised to call again. He then called on a tradesman, who he knew had supplied Mr. Slyver with some goods for his store at the Grubangrabit Mines ; when he was told that Mr. Slyver had retired from business, and no one knew whither.

He returned to his hotel ; and, after refreshing himself with Bass's ale, he dressed himself in his best clothes, and sallied out in search of Cockatoo Lodge. He had not much difficulty in finding it, for Mrs. Captain Gorger was apparently well known in the neighbourhood. He rapped at the door of the Lodge, and it was soon opened by Julia herself, dressed in a white muslin wrapper, with pink bows down the front, and her hair *en négligé*. She looked really charming ; for she had a higher colour than she had had the previous day, though her eyes scarcely looked so bright.

"My own dear, dear brother !" she exclaimed, with rapturous warmth, as she flung her arms around him, and gave him a much stronger hug than his other sister had ever given him ; then led him to a sofa, and seated herself by his side, with his right hand in hers, asked affectionately after his health, and hoped he did not catch cold through lending her his railway wrapper.

"I'm very well, thankee," stammered Christopher. "It's very warm to-day in the sun. I hope you did not catch cold coming home last night, Julia."

"No, darling ; I did not suffer in the least. I am so glad you have come. Aunt will be here directly, and she is longing to see you ; for I told her how good and generous you had been to me."

"That's nothing ; I would do ten times more than that to serve you, Juley."

"Precious fellow ! Let me kiss you again. You are all kindness and good-nature, just like my own darling brother, who is in the madhouse. O, here comes Aunt Gorger ! Aunty, this is my new brother, Christopher. Kiss him, and love him, Aunty, for he is a dear, dear fellow. I don't know what I should have done without him yesterday."

Aunt gave him a clumsy hug, which cracked his watch-glass, and made him cough ; then said she was very much obliged to him indeed for what he had done for her niece, which Christopher told her not to mention.

Mrs. Captain Gorger was decidedly a coarse-looking old woman, with a pimply face, a red nose, and very grimy finger nails. Christopher could not but remark that she was favourable to rum, raw onions, and brown rappee ; but Julia had told him that she was rather eccentric, notwithstanding which she was a devoted old lady. He resolved to like her with all her failings, because she was Julia's aunt ; but he hoped she would not wish to embrace him very often, for he really did not like that.

I need not record all the loving conversation of Christopher with his *soi-disant* sister ; her sympathy with him in his newly discovered loss ; and her anxiety lest he should lose more in trying to find what he had already lost. Neither will I tell all that the old lady said to him, and all she promised to do for him, to make him comfortable, if he liked to come and share in the domestic economy of Cockatoo Lodge. Her fears lest his linen should not be properly looked after, and well aired, put him so much in mind of his dear mother, that he would have kissed her again, maugre the rum and onions, only he dreaded her hugs.

At the pressing invitation of Julia, he stayed to a makeshift dinner of beefsteaks, pancakes, and draught porter. After dinner, the old lady and he fully discussed the policy of his shifting his lodgings : she taking care to impress on his mind, that it was his welfare alone that she was anxious about, which he acknowledged in broken expressions of gratitude. In brief, I record that before they had finished their second glass of rum punch, the arrangement was completed to the expressed satisfaction of them all ; Julia declaring, with a look as sweet as treacle, that she would do her utmost to make him happy, and perform the part of a devoted sister.

Next morning, all Christopher's personal effects, including a dray load of blue boxes and his musical clock, were carefully removed to Cockatoo Lodge ; and his heart rejoiced that he had at last found a home for himself, and secure lodgment for his unwieldy luggage. There I propose leaving him for the present, while I note a few more of the sayings and doings of our honest old friend Tim Rafferty, and his startling appearance at Turtlesell Lodge.

CHAPTER XXXV.

TIM RAFFERTY'S unexpected Arrival at Turtleshell Lodge. Commotion in the House, and the rattle-brain Conduct of Sally Mander, with other comical Incidents.

ONE summer evening, a little more than three months after the "Calabash" left Sydney Cove, Tim Rafferty might have been seen trudging along the dusty road towards Tooting, with an enormous shark's head and shoulders under his arm, and a sailor's bag, containing sundry other curiosities, slung behind his back. It was grey dusk, and the hall lamp was not lighted, when Tim struck "eight bells"—as he called it—on the front door of Turtleshell lodge.

In less than a minute the door was opened by Jane the housemaid; and in less than another minute there was an uproar in the house which would take me more than an hour to describe. The girl no sooner caught a glimpse of the horribly gaping jaws of the shark, than she uttered a loud shriek, and fell down in a fit on the door mat. Whereupon Tim hastily put the head and shoulders down on the outer door step, and ran to raise the fallen girl.

At that instant Mrs. Cockle and Sophy rushed from the drawing-room and asked, "What's the matter?" in a shrill major key, and were naturally enough scared at seeing a strange man, with a bag on his back, murdering the housemaid,—as they imagined. Sophy, of course, fainted at once; for her nerves were weak as cobwebs; but her mother had presence of mind to call Sally Mander and Rakes, before she swooned. Up raced fat Sally from the kitchen, twirling a watchman's rattle as she ran, and roaring "Murder!" with all her might.

"Och botheration! Stop yer blather an racket, ye ould cart horse: can't ye see the crather is dying here as fast as she can? Come an cast off the lashins ov her stays; an fitch me a sharp knife to cut away this head gear."

"O you bloodthirsty villain!" shrieked Sally, at the same instant striking Tim a ringing blow on the head with the rattle,

which made him drop the housemaid, and rub his head with both hands. Sally then ran to her mistress, who had sunk senseless on the stairs, beside her prostrate daughter.

Meanwhile old Rakes—armed with an empty blunderbuss—had run round to the front door; but the moment he saw the shark's grinning head on the steps, he exclaimed, "Ods goblins!" and started back in terror; then ran away full speed towards the front gate, in the horrible belief that the "wonderful crocodile" had escaped from Greenwich fair, and was pursuing him with open mouth. In a few minutes he returned with two constables, the beadle of the parish, and the butcher's boy. They cautiously approached the door-steps, and first of all demolished the shark's head with staves and stones; then rushed into the hall, and seized Tim, who was still rubbing his head, and staring about him in speechless amazement at the sudden upset his presence had caused in the house; and occasionally examining his fingers for marks of blood from the rising bump on his crown.

"That's he: hold him, Beadle, while I shoot him," shouted Rakes, with a tremulous voice.

"Arrah, bad cess to yez! what do ye mane at all? Git out ov this, an lave me alone, or be jabers I'll knock the dead lights out ov some ov yez pritty quick. Shough! do ye take me for a thief or a robber, that ye trate me in this unjintlemanly way?—fusht knock me brains out wid a rattle, thin shoot me like a mad dog! Be aisy, I tell yez; hands off me, I say; an take the blunderbuss out ov me eye. Where's the missis? Tell her Tim Rafferty wants her, an she'll pritty soon make some ov ye coves walk the plank, I'll ingage. Bad manners to yez, ye beggars!"

"Who is that? Bless me, who is that?" asked Mrs. Cockle, opening her eyes at the well-remembered sound of Tim's brogue. "Tim Rafferty, did he say?"

"To be shure it is, Mam; an it's a good job ye spoke in time; for this ould bloke wud have poked his muskit down me throat in another minit, an thin I shudn't ha been able to tell nobody me name. I've come all the way from Sydney on purpose to see yez, Mam, an I'm thinkin I'd betther have stopped away; for I've got a lump on the top ov me head as big as a young cocoa-nut, what that fat crather guv me wid her rattle—an dear knows what I'd have got beside be this time, ony that ye jist woke up from yer nap in time to save me."

"Goodness heart alive! whatever is the cause of all this

uproar and excitement?" asked Mrs. Cockle, now thoroughly aroused to her senses. "I thought there were robbers in the house. That silly girl Jane ought to be horsewhipped for upsetting the whole family with her ridiculous fancies. The idea of her fainting away at the sight of a respectable sailor! Come inside, Mr. Rafferty, pray. Go away, beadle, this minute. Rakes, I'm surprised at you! Dear, dear me, I am very sorry you should have been attacked in this unwarrantable way, Mr. Rafferty. I hope your head is not injured."

"Troth, I think it's sittled altogether, Mam; but I'll jist have a look at it," said Tim, stepping into the portico. "Be dashed, thin, iv it isn't spoilt intirely! an that's a pity, for it wos a lovely countenance for a sharrk. Ivery bone in it is knocked inta dominocs, so it is."

"Gracious me!" exclaimed Mrs. Cockle, hurrying to the hall door in alarm, when she saw Tim picking up the scattered bones of the shark's head, and lamenting over the loss in his peculiar way. "O, I see, that is the fish's head which Christopher said he had sent to us by you. Never mind it, Mr. Rafferty. Rakes will pick it up. Come into the parlour. I am afraid your own head is hurt."

"Not at all, Mam. There's a bit ov a lump on top ov it sartinly; but I rayther like a tap on the head, now an agin; espicially from a delicate female."

Tim went into the parlour, while Rakes and his *posse comitatús* retired to the servants' hall, to discuss the late uncommon occurrence, and to criticize the taste of their mistress in inviting that horrid man into her sitting-room.

Alderman Cockle was dining at Guildhall that day, and did not return home till late. With much difficulty Tim was pressed into an easy-chair; and after the ladies' nerves had become restored to order, and Tim had been refreshed with hot coffee and currant cake, they began to ply him with question upon question relative to Christopher's doings on the voyage; to all of which he replied with characteristic quaintness and caution.

Sophy had sent a message to Lizzie Whiffin, that a special courier had arrived with news from Christopher, when that young lady flew over to the Lodge on the wings of love; for she entertained a genuine affection for the absent youth. While Mrs. Cockle paused for breath after her excited inquiries into all the *minutiae* of her dear boy's daily doings, the young ladies began to pour in a regular broadside—as Tim called it—of

questions respecting the manners and customs of the inhabitants of Australia; whether they lived in houses or wigwams; whether they used crockery ware, and knives and forks, at table, or wooden plates and fingers; whether the native-born children were black, white, or grey, and other inquiries equally sensible; until Tim began to scratch his head, which was a sure sign that he was getting bothered.

"But do the ladies of Sydney dress after the English fashion, Mr. Rafferty?" asked Sophy.

"Some on em does, Miss, an some on em dresses in Dutch fashion, I think, for they are mighty roomy—savin yer prisince. It's a very unconvenient rig, too, I'm thinkin, for whin heavy squalls ov wind come on all ov a sudden, an cotch em away from home, poor things, they don't look themselves at all. Dash'd iv I know what they do look like, nayther. I've sane lots ov em scuddin away afore the wind under bare poles, and"—

"Hem—a—a—you say it is very warm in Sydney, Mr. Rafferty?" interrupted Mrs. Cockle, while the young ladies stifled their giggles in their handkerchiefs, and blushed, of course.

"Troth it is, Mam: warm as the 'Calabash's' coal bunkers, sometimes. Its too hot, intirely; as the Scotchman sed whin he burnt his mouth wid the porridge. Thin the moskeetees are awful savage to 'new chums,' an its onpossible to scratch out the marks they make wid their sharp little nozzles."

"What kind of beasts are mosquitoes?" asked Lizzie, with a shrug of disgust.

"They are rale spiteful craythurs, Miss; something like young unicorns wid wings on their backs, an they make a row in yer ears afther ye git into bed, just like a saw-mill. Still an all they're not much bigger nor Irish gnats, though, ov course, not so well bred. Afther they've poked yez wid their horns, yed betther not say nothin about it; lasteways, ye'd betther not scratch yerself,—though its rale hard to kape yer fingers quiet,—or ye'll pretty soon have lumps on yez as big as ripe gooseberries. Och musha! what wid moskeetees an rats, it's mighty little pace and quietness I got o' nights all the time the 'Calabash' lay in Sydney Cove. I was allers glad to rouse out ov a mornin to rist meself, soh."

"But you could surely have got comfortable lodgings on shore, Mr. Rafferty?" said Mrs. Cockle, in a half-doubting tone.

“That’s true enough, Mam, an I’d liked to have stopped ashore right well, but circumstances previnted me; as the convict chap sed whin he was chained to the anchor on board the hulk at Woolwich. There’s hapes ov rispictable cribs in Australy, no doubt, Mam. Be the same token there’s some ov another sort to be met wid, too; an sailors often have the luck of finding em out, soh. Rats are innicent crathurs alongside ov some ov the customers ye may run foul ov in many of the sailors’ lodging-houses, Mam. The poor things,—the rats, I mane,—whin they’re rale hungry, may make a male off yer big toe afore ye know what they’re about; or take a corner off yer ear, or, may be, a bite off your nose,—I’ve cotched em at that game, meself; thin ye know the worst ov it, an they dont often bite yez twice in one place. But, on the other hand, Mam, yez dont know what ye may not git, that’s a fact; an I shud not like to tell ladies what ye may raysinably expict to git in some ov them dhirty holes that poor Jack often tumbles intil. But they are not all like that, Mam; an its ony fair play to say so.

“By yer lave, Mam, I’ll tell yez a yarrn as I heerd a parson tell one day; an ye may take my worrd for it, it’s as thrue as a nautical almanac. His rivrence sed he wos travelling in the bush wid a friend a long way north of Sydney, whin, one night, they stopped at an accommodation house; an its mighty bad accommodation they got there, as Paddy sed whin they put him to bed in the pig-sty.

“Well, Mam, they hove to at the door ov the shanty, an axed for board an lodging for themselves an their horses. ‘There’s a prime big paddock yonder,’ sed the landlord, ‘an I’ll put yer beasts intil it, while the Missis gits yer supper ready. Come inside, jintlemen,’ sed he, ‘dont bother to wipe the mud off yer boots, cos yer see we’ve ony got dirt for the floor, and nothin else.’ So in they wint; an the masther took the horses to the paddick. Troth it was a big un shure enough, wid oceans ov wather all round it, but sorra a bit ov grass enough to physic a kangaroo dog; so the poor brutes had to ate wather an gum leaves. It wasn’t dacint ov the jintlemen to lave their poor jaded horses to such lane diet as that, afther carryin em forty miles or so, since their last feed ov corn; but riders arn’t allers so attentive to their bastes as they are to thimselves. Maybe the jintlemen couldn’t help it, though: a man can’t make grass, though he can make hay.

“Well, Mam, afther they’d made a male ov bacon an eggs,

wid black tea, brown bread, and dirt, they sat an gossipped an hour or two wid the landlady, thin they wint to their bedroom, which was nearly twice as big as a carrier's cart. It had a door widout hinges, an a windee widout glass, an there wor cracks in the slabs wide enow for the parson to poke his toes through, iv he'd wanted to cool em. There wor two beds or stretchers in the room, an that's all the furniture there wos, barrin a round block ov wood for an aisy-chair, and a milk dish to wash themselves in.

"The parson stopped up awhile to say his prayers afther his friend had got into bed, thin he blew the light out, and jumped inta bed, too. But he pretty soon jumped out agin, wid his feelings shocked above a bit; for something clawed him awfully, and set up sich a screeching and cacklin as wud have scared any raysonable mortal to death: but his riverance was a parson, as I sed afore; so ov corse he worn't afeard ov the divil, though his friend in tother bed was in a rale flustration, shiverin and shakin, an wishin he wasn't a sinner. 'Strike a light, Gibbins,' sed the parson. 'Be quick; light a candle, an let's see whot the mischief this is that's scratched me all over. I'm afeerd it's a stray alligator,' ses he. Thin he called to the landlady, who was sleepin in the next room: 'Mrs. M'Mucky,' ses he, 'there's somethin in my bed.'

"'Lawk-a-daisy me! it's that old cluckin hen: she allers will go to that bed to lay, an I quite forgot to turn her out,' ses Mrs. M'Mucky. 'Put her outside, an shut the winder, iv ye please, thin she can't git in agin.' So his reverence hove the bird out ov the windee, and turned in agin; but there was a nest of eggs in the bed, an he smashed ivery one on em afore he knowed they wos there; and the old woman was mighty savage wid him in the mornin for not bein more careful.

"That's a thrue fact, Mam, ye may depend on it," said Tim, gazing at his shrugging audience. "It's all jinuine, ivery haporth, barrin the eggs; and I don't know eggsactly if I can warrant thim. Still an all that's not so bad as the other chap I heerd tell on, who jumped into bed one cold night wid a shnake siven feet long; and whin he put his legs down in the bed, he"——

"For mercy's sake, Mr. Rafferty, don't tell us any more of those horrible things, or I shall never be able to sleep a wink, for thinking of my poor dear boy, who is exposed to all those dangers and disagreeables. I hope he will not have to put up with Mrs. M'Mucky's accommodation, the slovenly old creature!"

"Niver fear, Mam. I didn't say all the accommodation houses in the counthry was that sort, not at all. Bekase one little pig is a black un, it's no rayson why the rist ov the litter mayn't be as white as mortar. It isn't Tim Rafferty as ull go and tell a hape ov lies about an illegant counthry like that, to scare good folks away from it, not a bit ov it, Mam. I'll lave that dirty job to thim fellows what likes to do it, as the flunkey sed, whin his masther wanted him to skin a dead horse."

"Now, do you really think, Mr. Rafferty, that Sydney is a place where a young man is likely to rise in life? that is to say, is it a safe place for my son to live in, unprotected as he is? You have seen a good deal of the world, and I should like to have your opinion on that subject."

"Troth, thin, Mam, it's harrd to say," replied Tim, who was rather puzzled what to say, and feared lest, in giving an honest answer, he should compromise the young man's interest. "Ye see, Mam, the darling bhoy hasn't got so much experiance as his fayther, that's plain enough; and ye can't put young heads on ould shoulders, as the sayin is. Experiance is as handy to a fellow as 'dead reckonin;' but it's precious dear, that's the worst ov it. Yer have to pay for it as ye git it, an often enough it isn't much good. I wudn't mind sellin some ov mine for a dose ov physic; but nobody wud have it at that low price. Other people's experiance is like second-hand clothes, not much valued. It's harrd worrk for a chap to climb up in the worrld, Mam, though it's aisy enough to slide down, as the sweep sed, whin he won the leg of mutton off the greasy pole."

"Maybe ye don't understand my maning, Mam," said Tim, observing the mystified looks of Mrs. Cockle; "so I will spake simply. I raythir wish you was alongside 'ov Masther Cockle allers, Mam; cos ye see a mother's a mighty convanient comfit whin a chap hasn't got a wife to take care ov him, and see that nobody pulls his teeth out widout his knowing it, or impty his pockits, which is all the same thing. And iv I may be so bould as to spake me honest mind, Mam, I think it wud be all the betther for him iv he hadn't got so much golden ballast; cos it makes him roll about pritty much, and he's likely enough to carry away somethin or other up aloft. But I see ye don't understand my sea lingo, Mam; so I'll dhrop it. Ye have often enough seen lots ov hungry dogs smellin at a cat's-meat cart, I'll be bound; but not one ov the curs wud look at the carrt iv it was full ov bricks, or the like o' that. Ye'll know what I

mane by that, fast enough, Mam : anybody can see the common sinse in that argiment.

"Me darlint ould mother used to say ov her moke,—donkey, I mane,—afore he was killed wid the steeple, 'The best way to kape the bastè humble an quiet,' ses she, 'is to give him plenty ov work ;' for she allers fed the crather well. 'Troth,' ses she, 'iv I wos to lave him to ate his fill for a week or two, an give him no worrk to do, the nixt time I put him in the cart, he'd boult for sartin, an smash the consarn to smithereens, an maybe break somebody's neck into the bargain.' Axin yer pardin for spakin so plain, Mam, iv ye'll ony look sinsibly at the ould woman's rayson, ye'll see it's as beautifully clear as a charity sermon. It wud be murther, an no mistake, to smother a babby in virgin honey. An there is often a dale more love in a birch rod than in a purse ov suverins. But don't you be oneasy about the young jintleman ; for tin minutes afther I git back to Sydney,—an I'm goin to start, wid all me family, as soon as iver me brother Phelim gits his nixt crop ov taties dug up and sould,—I'll look straight enough afther yer son, niver fear, Mam. He has allers been kind to me, and so have you too, Mam ; an a jinuine Irishman niver forgits a good turn, that's a fact ; an he often remimbers a bad un too."

"There are churches in Sydney, I suppose," said Mrs. Cockle, who foresaw that Tim was about to express unlimited gratitude for her very small favours.

"Churches is it, Mam ? Plinty ov em, an chapels too."

"Have they got steeples on them ?" asked Lizzie.

"Some on em have, Miss ; an rale illigant consarns they are, too ; an some have got mortgages on em ; leastways, I've heerd people say so, but I never seed one meself ; an I don't know what they're like, at all."

"Are things in general tolerably cheap in Sydney ? English wares, I mean ?" asked Mrs. Cockle.

"Some ov em are dog chape, Mam. Troth, its robbin somebody ye are whin ye buy em at all. Thin agin, some things are awfully dear ; for it often depends on the conscience ov the daler, and some ov them chaps are no more to be trusted nor a stranded foot rope. I've heerd Mr. Toddle say, that the poor customers far away in the bush have to pay mortally dear for the little bits ov comforts they want ; and often enough have to buy things they don't want jist to git the things that they do want."

"I don't understand that, Mr. Rafferty," said Mrs. Cockle.

"In coorse you don't, bless your innocince," said Tim ; "but

I'll try to explain it ta yez. Supposin a shepherd wants a pair ov new breeches—savin yer prisince—away he tramps to the shop, a long way off, an axes for em.

“‘Shure, an what else did yer want?’ ses the daler, lookin mighty indepindent, cos he knowed there wasn’t another shop nearer nor twinty miles.

“‘I dont want nothin else,’ ses the shepherd, ‘barrin a bit ov good tabackee, iv ye’ve got it, cos all our weed on the station is as mouldy as ould boots.’

“‘Och shure, ye must be afther takin somethin else beside that,’ ses the daler, ‘cos I don’t get nothin at all out ov breeches, nor tabackee naythir. Here is a nice gridiron, or a lovely leather hat-box, or a beautiful picture ov the coronation ov King Richard; an troth ye must take one ov thim lots, or go widout breeches.’

“Dont ye see the principle now, Mam?” asked Tim, in a tone which marked his sense of the injustice of such transactions.

Mrs. Cockle momentarily expected the young ladies’ suppressed giggles would break out into uncontrollable laughter; so she adroitly changed the topic. As she was desirous for Mr. Cockle to see Tim, she prevailed on him to stay the night at the Lodge.

After another hour’s pleasant chat with the ladies, Tim—who was dying for a smoke—said he “should like to get outside, and stretch his legs a bit, for they had got cramped wid sittin in the aisy-chair;” so he humbly bade the ladies good night, and retired.

Half-an-hour afterwards he was sitting on the kitchen table, smoking his pipe, and giving scraps of his experience on sea and on shore, while the loud shouts of laughter of the servants from time to time showed that there was perfect amity between them and their comical guest.

Sally Mander repeatedly expressed her regret for hitting him on the head with the rattle; but Tim gallantly assured her that “he liked it; for it put him in mind of his own dear darlint wife, Norah, who is dead an gone.” In short, before Tim retired to rest, Sally had made a strong impression on his heart as well as on his head, and he admitted to Rakes,—whose bedroom he shared,—“that Sally was the sweetest crather he had saue for many a long day, and that she wud make a lovely wife for a sailor, bekase she had sich lots ov pluck:” adding, that “he had not had sich a whack on the head as she guv him, since the night ould Nelly Kelly gave her grand sheaveo, in her new house, whin he had had a rale shindy wid Micky Ryan, an got his head close up cracked intirely, wid the handle ov a grindstone.”

CHAPTER XXXVI.

TIM RAFFERTY's Interview with Alderman Cockle. Tim's comical Defence of Christopher from the grave Charges which had been preferred against him by certain Residents in Sydney. Tim's Engagement with Sally Mander.

NEXT morning Mr. Cockle—after warmly greeting Tim, and thanking him for all his attention to Christopher—said he would like to have an hour's confidential chat with him; so Tim followed the Alderman into the library, humbly seated himself on a stool in a corner, and put his hat on the floor.

While Mr. Cockle was looking over some letters in his desk, Tim took a quiet survey of the room, and stared with wondering eyes at the immense rows of books on the shelves around him. His veneration for the Alderman increased, as he viewed the ample stores of knowledge; and he innocently fancied what a wise man Mr. Cockle must be; little dreaming that he was not much better acquainted with the contents of the books than Tim was. But the worthy Alderman was a true Englishman, and liked to have plenty of everything in his house. He felt bound, too, to keep pace with his rich neighbour, Lawyer Whiffin; besides, as he tritely remarked, "it was good for trade, and bookmakers must live as well as other poor creatures."

"Take a seat a little nearer, Mr. Rafferty," said the Alderman, motioning to a chair opposite to him. "I am sorry to say, I have some unpleasant matters to refer to, of which I imagine you are not wholly ignorant. The fact is, I have received several letters from Sydney, which I have kept secret from my wife; for the knowledge of their contents would kill her outright."

"Wheugh!" whistled Tim, while his face expressed wonder and anxiety. "I'm rale sorry to hear you say that, Sir. Them's dangerous consarns to handle. I've heerd tell ov letthers chock full ov skyrocket powther, or some other sort ov blowin up stuff, as ud tattoo yez all over like a Mouri, or bung

yer eyes up, an blow yer nose off, the minit ye opened the envelopes. I hope them's not the sort ov letthers ye've got from Sydney, Sir; though they do sind rum things from there, as the keeper ov the Great Exhibition sed to himself."

"I'm very sorry to say the contents of the letters are more pungent even than detonating powder," replied the Alderman, with a sigh. "They have sorely wounded my heart, Tim. But I will tell you the substance of them, without being at the pain of reading them again. They are from certain gentlemen in Sydney, to whom I procured letters of introduction for my son; and they force me to believe that Christopher has acted the part of an impostor and a thief; in fact, that he has proved a downright villain."

"Dashed iv I'll belave that any how, Sir," said Tim, with energy. "Savin yer prisinee, I can't take that in at all at all, not I. He may be a foo—a gander, I mane. I'll say nothin' agin that; but blow my buttons off, if he's a thief and a vagabond. That won't go down at all; as the little duck sed, when he tried to swallow a nutmeg."

"Stay a minute, Mr. Rafferty. Hear a few of the facts. The first letter is from Mr. Blunt, and states that my son waited on him with a letter of introduction, and made a very favourable impression on his whole family. The next day he called again, borrowed five pounds for only ten minutes; but has not been seen by Mr. Blunt since."

"An shure what did he want to borrow five pounds for, when he had got lashins ov money ov his own in his box? cos he told me so himself. That's not a likely yarn, Sir, as the mate sed whin the sailor tould him he seed a ghost sittin on the binnacle. I don't belave Misther Blunt, axin his pardin for bein so bould as to say that behind his back."

"The next letter is from Mr. Toggery," continued Mr. Cockle; "and it informs me, that Christopher called on that gentleman with a letter; borrowed a great coat and an umbrella; and Mr. Toggery thinks he stole a telescope from the drawing-room table."

"Och Mike! git out. I wudn't belave that same, iv me blissed owld fayther jumped up, and tould it me this very minit; not I, indeed, cos it's against all raysin an common sinse too. Fusht an foremost, Sir, I ax yer, what on airth wud he want with a grate coat whin the weather jist then was pritty nigh hot enough to bake pertaties in the streets? an shure hadn't he got an illigant telescope ov his own; as good a one

as ever was handled by an Admiral? To be shure he had, Sir: thin whot for wud he want to stale Mr. Togger's glass, I'd like to know? Faugh! that's a bigger lie nor the fusht one, iv there's any difference at all in the size ov em."

"Wait a bit, Mr. Rafferty. Hear this," said Mr. Cockle with painful emotion. "Mr. M'Swankey says my son called on him three times; and the last time he called he was disgracefully drunk, and took improper liberties with one of the female servants. What do you say to that horrible conduct?"

"What do I say, is it?" replied Tim with a puzzled air. "Well well, that doesn't look nice sartinly, as the Cockney chap sed ov the bad oyster. Still an all, Sir, it's mighty hard to say what's true and what's a lie, as the worl'd goes now-a-days, bekase lies are often made up to look so deçatefully pritty; or they're sugared over wid gingerbread like quack physic, that amost any fool ud swallow widout knowin what they are made ov. Thin again, Sir, it's as natural for one lie to breed another as it is for quack physic to breed coffins,—that's my experianced opinion, Sir."

"I won't say I don't belave the young mather got drunk, Sir, cos I think it's likely enough he did. Be the same token I've sane lots ov jintlemen do that same thing, widout hurtin their consciences a bit in life; though it's a dhirty trick whot any honest man ought to be ashamed of, soh. I'll belave he got drunk, Sir; for I won't tell a lie for nobody,—but as for the yarn about the girrl, dear knows how much ov that's true.

"I'd most as soon swear that she took liberties wid him, so I wud; for I niver seed him look at a famale woman, except wid his eyes half shut, an his chaaks as red as a soger's jacket; for he's the bashfullest crather in the worl'd.

"Shure enough there wor lots ov girrls aboard the 'Calabash' to look at, an some ov em wor terribly pritty too; but he allers used to shrink up, an look scared, whiniver they whisked by him, for all the worl'd as iv he wos afeared they wud saw his legs off wid their iron hoops, or knock him down wid their striking looks. It's my opinion he's as innocent as a little chicken. Shure iv I belaved him guilty I wudn't screen him, not I, Sir; iv he wos me own boy Barney. I'd shillelay any feller in a minnit who wud dare to insult a woman, an sarve him right too, the spalpeen; but I've sane so many schaming tricks in my travels, that I'd wait till I spit on

me hand twice afore I used the sthick, in case I shud crack a head for nothin at all.

"Whisht, Sir, while I tell yez a little yarn, while I think ov it; an it's twice as true as Mr. M'Swankey's letter, I'll engage. I knowed a chap onst,—as harmless as a suckin guinea pig, he wos,—though he wos a long splice cove, six feet three. Well, Sir, one night he wos seeing a young woman home to her sitivation, and when he got near her gate, he says, 'Susan, honey! give us a buss afore ye go in.' 'I sharn't,' says she; 'get out widz yer.' 'Och, do, darlint!' says he, in a coaxin way, and takin hold ov her reticule, jist in fun. 'I'll kape yer bag till yez guv me a buss,' ses he. Wid that the crather skreeled out, 'Thieves! thieves! thieves!' wid all her might. 'Och, bad luck till yez, ye'll ruin me intirely,' sez the feller, regularly scared. 'Take yer bag,' ses he, pitching it at her, an runnin away double quick. But shure enough he run up agin two constables, who collared him, an took him to the watch-house, an shoved him in wid about forty other reglar customers, who were lyin all ov a lump on the floor. Ov coorse he wos let off nixt day wid a caution, bekase the girrl didn't dare to say black wos the white ov his eye; but the poor chap wos so shamed ov seein his name in print, that he niver held up his head straight agin till he died. So ye see it's right to look sharrp into thim sort ov yarrns, Sir, or ye might be hangin some ov the bist men in the worrld for ony jist lookin at the pritty girrls out ov the corner ov their eyes; an it's as nateral for a feller to do that as it is to wink."

"That is very true, Tim," said Mr. Cockle; "still I think your tall friend ought to have known better than to act in that improper way to the young woman; and I don't pity him much for the dilemma he got into. Though I do not commend the girl for her vicious accusation,—for it is not probable the man meant to steal her bag,—I think girls cannot be too vigilant in checking the first improper advances of young men; for if they do not, it is fearfully probable that they will be led astray."

"But to return to my son's doings: the most serious letter I have received is from a Mr. Smudge, who states that Christopher called on him several times, and in various ways acted the part of a thorough hypocrite. One afternoon my son drove Mrs. and Miss Smudge into Sydney; and while they were doing a little shopping, he drove off with the dog-cart to Paramatta, where it was afterwards ascertained he sold the

vehicle, borrowed a saddle, and rode the horse to Twofold Bay, where he sold it; and it is supposed he took steamer for Melbourne; for he had not been seen or heard of since."

"Och, murther an Irish! that settles it all, Sir," exclaimed Tim, starting from his chair, greatly excited. "That's a topper, as the chap sed whin the church bell tumbled on his head. Now I'm sartin sure, it's a wicked scheme against the young man altogether; an I'd like to have to dale wid the haythins who planned it, so I wud. Plaise to hear me rayson for half a minit, Sir."

"In the fusht plaice, I believe Musther Christopher wud no more drive a dog-cart, than I'd drive an elephant-an-castle,—that's a fact. Faix he had drivin enough in Milbourne, whin the cab rin away wid him,—lasteways the horse bolted, an close up knocked him inta nothin. Thin how cud he ride a horse to Twofold Bay, I'd like to know, whin an ould mule at Saint Helena pritty nigh shook the gumption out ov him intirely, and last ov all rolled him off her back like a bag ov beans? It's impossible, Sir; that's the way to say it."

"Thin agin as to his scudding off to Milbourne, I can prove an *alibi* afore all the lawyers in the land, iv that ud be any good; for I seed him wid me own eyes just the day afore I lift Sydney, an I'll swear he worn't in Milbourne thin, anyhow. Its a thumpin big lie altogether; as the boatswain sed, whin his wife towld him she heerd he was hanged in Bombay for kidnappin a black woman. Axin yer pardin, Sir, that's my opinion."

"But, Mr. Rafferty, these letters were written by very respectable men,—though I do not know them personally,—and I cannot see what motive they could possibly have for unjustly accusing my son of such despicable conduct," said Mr. Cockle, while his countenance evidenced that Tim's logic had not been inoperative. "What could they mean by writing me such letters, if my son is innocent?"

"Dear knows what they mane, at all; an it's no good tryin to find out by readin thim letters again, Sir; so I'd advise yez to heave em all intil the lumber hole for the prisint. There's no comfit in seein yer shadow in a muddy ditch, not a bit."

"Och hone! but the divil's awfully deep," continued Tim, looking unusually serious. "Mighty grate blaggird, and the very invinter ov blarney itself. Dont I know a hape ov his tricks? for haven't I had long years dalings wid him an his bhoys? I have so. More nor ye'll iver have, I hope, Sir. I've sane the owld bhoy in all shapes an sizes. Sometimes whin he's bin roarin like a team ov mad bullocks, an playin the

mischief wid iverybody in his track ; nobody cud mistake him thin, anyhow. But I've sane him agin, when there was more danger by half to thim as didn't know him by the smell,—whin he'd got his tail close reefed, an his horns housed like top-gallant masts in heavy weather ; an himself rigged out in suparior broadcloth, glossy as a black cat ; so that innocint folks wudn't tell him from a rale jintleman. Whin he has smiled, I've heerd ladies say, 'Arrah, what a darlin duck he is to be shure ! An whin he spake to thim, his blarneyin worrds was so soft that nobody cud hear him at all.—But, och Mike ! look out for your corns, iv he comes alongside ov yez with his ugly hoofs.' I used to say to my mates,—for I knowed him all the time,—'An mind yer bad legs, me bhoys, iv his tail breaks adrift ; for it ull come sweeping round yer like a ten-inch hawser, an it's timber toes for life ye'd git, an no mishtake : or, maybe, ye'd be dead corpses afore ye cud strike siven bells.'

"Troth, I know the old codger, Sir, the minit I see him, an I'm up to a hape of his dodges. Depind on it, I haven't bin lower steward in the Cunard liners these many years, widout seein a few ov his doins ; an I've heerd him talk about wooden clocks an snakes. He won't git to windward ov Tim Rafferty in a hurry, take my worrd, Sir. Now I'm thinkin the divil wrote them letthers himself, Sir ; or towld some of his crew to write em ; for he's got a rale handy gang ov rascals around him, who wud do any mortal thing, iv he only winked at em : from pisonin poor crathers wid bad grog or bad grub, to robbin a poor parson. Troth, thim fellers ud think no more about takin away a man's character, than they wud of pullin a carrot from his gardin. Not a bit more, Sir.

"Take my exparienced advice, Misther Cockle, an don't yez belave what anybody ses about nobody, till somebody tells yer the other side ov the story ; and that's ony fair play, naythir. Many a poor fellow's reputation has bin torn to rags an tatters by the fangs ov persecuters an slanderers, an sometimes he has niver bin able to show his innocince till he was dead an buried ; an thin he proved, plain enough, that it was all lies together ; an that he was as honest as daylight itself, an there wasn't a rogue's bone in his coffin. The very fellers as slandered him had robbed him fusht ov all ; an shure it's devilish nateral for rogues to hate the poor crathurs they've ruined.

"Now, Sir, maybe yer son is innicint ov all this villany. I belave he is, as shure as I'm livin ; howsomever, it's ony common sinse to sift the evidence, as the lawyers say, afore ye

say he's guilty. Dash it all! fair play, iv it's ony a monkey ye're daling wid. Shure it wudn't be right to hang a chap, iv he'd done nothin wrong. Jack Ketch himself wudn't be so onraysonable as that, anyhow. Not he. Iv ye wudn't think me too bowld, Sir, I'd just recommind yez to write til yer brother over in Australy. He's a rale good man, an no mishtake; for I've heerd Misther Toddle shpake ov him. Be the same token, I'll write to Misther Toddle meself, this blissed night, or to-morrow, so I will, an I'm glad I thought ov it. Iv there's any truth at all in thim yarns, he'll fish it out, I'll bet a pinny; an I'll ingage he'll stand by the young jintleman, too, iv his inimies are tryin to murther him unlawfully."

"Your advice is very sensible, Mr. Rafferty; and I think I will adopt it," said Mr. Cockle, musingly. "I will write to my brother by next mail, and send him copies of these letters. In the mean time, I will try to suspend my judgment on these grave charges against my son. But I feel that I cannot write him calmly, for I strongly suspect he has not attended to my advice since he left home; and I have reason to fear he has been extravagant and intemperate. I sent that boy away with an outfit fit for a young prince, Mr. Rafferty, and £2,000 in his pocket; and I have, since then, sent him a large shipment of Irish butter."

"Och, musha! Two thousand pounds! What a power ov good that might have done, iv ye had acted sinsibly wid it, Sir! Be jabers, it ud buy a big ship-load ov taties for the poor hungry Irishmen; an the butther wud hav just done to ha ate wid the taties, so it wud. Arrah, Misther Cockle, what for did yez be sich a—a—sich a soft jintleman, I mane, to do that same silly trick? Ye'd betther hav hove all yer money into the Lifsey, an the butther along wid it, nor gav it ta a young feller who doesn't know how to use it no more nor he knows how to use a billyhook. Not a bit. Troth, iv ye'd gav him two thousand red herrins, an tould him to go to worrk, an make his own fortin; an guv the money to poor old folks who are half starvin around yez, ye'd hav show'd a mighty dale more gumption,—axin yer pardin,—an yer son wud ha blissed yer for it, by an by."

"You are right, Mr. Rafferty; and I have long since seen my folly," said the Alderman, getting up, and pacing the room with a troubled air. "But the fact is, the boy has been a pet, and I have yielded to his mother's and sister's persuasion against my own judgment; and now I sadly fear that our foolish fondness and over indulgence will be his ruin."

“Laziness has been his bane, ever since he was first breeched. I have seen that ; and though I know very well that plenty of work is the best antidote for that evil, I have not enforced it ; but, on the contrary, I have given him the means of indulging in all the follies which are bred and nurtured by idleness. The contemplation of the *finale* makes me shudder for the peace and happiness of my household. I read in one of my books, the other day, the opinion of a great man, that ‘the worst vices springing from the worst principles, the excesses of the libertine, and the outrages of the plunderer, usually take their rise from early unsubdued idleness.’ I firmly believe that is true, Mr. Rafferty : and I sorrowfully feel that, whatever disgrace my son has fallen into, all his deflections from the paths of rectitude may be fairly ascribed to that hateful cause !”

The old gentleman here became so overpowered by his reflections, that he sat down on his chair, covered his face with his hands, and wept. Tim’s face plainly showed the sympathy of his heart ; but he wisely refrained from speaking it. “Betther not try to stop a bad wound all at onst,” he muttered. “Perhaps a little bit ov crying will do the old sowl a hape ov good : he doesn’t oftin cry, I’ll ingage.” Tim then slid softly out of the library, and into the kitchen.....

I will not attempt to detail all Tim’s sayings and doings in the servants’ hall that night ; for it would fill too many pages. The mirth of the domestics was so boisterous at times, that Mrs. Cockle got quite nervous, and begged the Alderman to go and put a stop to it ; but he jocosely remarked, “Let them enjoy themselves, Mother : they don’t often get such a merry guest. I declare I should like to be in with them, to hear some of that comical Irishman’s stories.”

Little Bob, the stable-boy, sat in a corner behind the dresser, and laughed till his buttons flew off ; and old Rakes tapped him on the head with his horny knuckles, by way of easing off a little of his jealous wrath, at perceiving that all the maid-servants were becoming fascinated with Tim. As briefly as possible I record that a mutual attachment sprang up between Tim and Sally Mander ; and before he left the Lodge next morning, Sally had promised to give him her hand and heart at an early day ; and further promised to amalgamate her little fortune in the savings’ bank with Tim’s fortune, and to accompany him as his faithful, loving wife, wherever the winds of fortune might waft them.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

CONTAINS an Account of Christopher's domestic Economy at Cockatoo Lodge. His increasing Attachment to his *Sister* Julia, and his matrimonial Engagement with her. Aunt Gorger's expensive Habits. Pays a Visit to Mr. Toddle at Frogs' Flat.

I NOW return to Christopher, and will briefly review his erratic proceedings for the two months that succeeded his abrupt departure from Cockleorum Hall, during which time he neglected to write to his uncle or cousins.

He had taken up his abode with his *quasi* sister and her aunt, who, as he often playfully told them, were killingly kind. The very reasonable terms which the old lady proposed to him were simply, that he should pay one-third of the household expenses. She at first modestly stated, that she did not know what to charge; in fact, she did not wish to make a charge at all: but on Christopher insisting on paying, if he came, she thought it was fair and equitable, that they should share and share alike in the expenses, as well as in the comforts, of their little happy family circle.

Christopher was quite pleased with the arrangement, which promised to be much more economical than living at an hotel, to say nothing of the advantages and privileges of such a genteel home. Julia undertook to keep a faithful account of the expenses, and to show her housekeeping book as often as her aunt and her dear brother wished to see it. And as Mrs. Gorger's rents would not come in directly, she proposed that Christopher should pay the expenses for the first month; then her aunt's turn would come; and finally, she herself would find the coin for domestic necessities for a like term. She delicately hinted that she had large expectations, though but a small amount of present capital.

Nothing could be simpler than that arrangement, which Christopher acquiesced in at once; and when he handed his loving sister a cheque to begin with, she kissed him warmly, called him her "precious pet brother," and promised to be very

economical. The contented trio then sat down to sup off stewed oysters and whisky toddy; which, after a time, so affected Aunt Gorger, that she had to be assisted to bed by her niece, who explained to Christopher—when she returned from the chamber—that her dear aunt's digestive organs were very weak.

Weeks glided on as quickly as usual; and Christopher had embarked in many promising speculations, at the instance of his active agent. He had sold his beans, and gone largely into bran and cracked corn. He had bought up white pepper, to hold for a famine price; and made an extensive venture on cajeput oil and colonial blacking. He had also purchased Mr. Dumps's cattle station at Diddler's Plains, on the Billybong river, a dead bargain, in partnership with Mr. Shicer,—that is to say, Christopher found £1,000 in cash, and Mr. Shicer gave his bills for £1,000, with Christopher's endorsement. In consideration of Christopher paying for his share in ready money, he was to be regarded as the sleeping partner, and to have no bother with the animals themselves. Mr. Shicer had shown Christopher, as clearly as figures could do it, that there was a cool £1,000 to be made out of the spec, if they realized on the stock in a few months, which it was thought most advisable to do.

The bargain was soon completed; for Mr. Shicer had a very off-hand way of dealing, and Mr. Dumps was evidently a soft man,—at least, Christopher thought so; for he agreed, without a grumble, to give up all the stores on his station, and to throw in a team of working bullocks. Of course, Christopher did not know Diddler's Plains, nor the cattle; but Mr. Shicer said he knew all about them; and the simple circumstance of his being willing to become a partner in the concern, was enough to inspire Christopher with confidence.

On receipt of the cash, Mr. Dumps—as in duty bound—gave a good dinner to his customers, at an hotel; and they all got drunk in drinking each other's health. Then Christopher gave a supper to Mr. Dumps and Mr. Shicer at Cockatoo Lodge, at which festival Aunt Gorger, in her over-anxiety to do everything in style, tumbled down with a dish of curried kidneys, and was obliged to go to bed immediately. After supper, Mr. Dumps was discovered in the act of chucking Julia under the chin; but having promptly apologized for the mistake, he was forgiven; and the friends parted at an early hour in the morning, after mutual vows of solid friendship.

These pleasant little social re-unions were followed by a succession of "jolly sprees" for ten days; at the expiration of which Mr. Shicer departed to the station, leaving Christopher to the tender care of his sister,—suffering from delirium tremens, and haunted by imaginary black fellows, armed with butchers' steels. A constant watch, day and night, was necessary to prevent his jumping down the well, to escape from his tormentors.

He was more than a fortnight prostrated by that attack; meanwhile Mr. Thugman had attended to his client's pecuniary interests with his usual diligence. His perfect system of accounts, and the punctuality with which he furnished Christopher with balance-sheets from month to month, obviated the necessity of his bothering his head with bookkeeping, which he did not understand. The wonderful facility, too, with which Mr. Thugman turned his (Christopher's) paper into coin, indisposed him to trouble himself much with money matters. His cheques were always paid at the bank, without a second look; and—to use a facetious figure of old Mr. Hookey—his bills melted like hogs' lard. The flying rumours of his unlimited capital—which he had heard from time to time—flattered his vanity; and though he had reason to suspect Mr. Thugman and his friend Mr. Hookey of originating the rumours, he could not suspect two such good men of having any selfish motives in doing so. He thought they were innocently deceiving themselves, or else they—with their keen judgment—saw a certainty of immense capital rapidly springing out of his speculations. At all events, he was considered a "first-rate mark" in the city. All the brokers bowed reverently as they passed him; and the bank managers always looked glad to see him. Mr. Thugman's respectful affection was ever manifest, and the fatherly interest of old Mr. Hookey was at times touching in the extreme. In short, Christopher was, commercially speaking, a happy man, an object of envy to hundreds of his necessitous neighbours, whose bills were as unmarketable as rusty sickles, and whose hearts were rusted with carking care.

His domestic comfort, too, was almost complete, for Julia studied his every whim with more than sisterly zeal; and though she certainly came to him for a cheque more frequently than he had calculated upon, she did it with such an air of winning simplicity and frankness, that he had not the heart to complain, or to go poring over the accounts, as though he doubted her honesty, or her arithmetical skill.

He had several times observed an infirmity of temper in Aunt Gorger, with a proneness to swear. He also had glaring proofs—beside the heap of empty bottles in the back yard—that she indulged in stimulants to an overpowering extent. Indeed, he was painfully convinced that she was decidedly drunk on the morning when she and her noisy neighbour, Mrs. Rouse, fought with clothes-props across the back palings. On the evening of that day, having nerved himself to the disagreeable duty, he hinted to his sister, in a delicate, brotherly way, his consciousness of her aunt's peculiar weakness; and at the same time gently insinuated that he thought their outlay for spirits was rather more than was justifiable in a small, genteel family.

"My darling duck!" said Julia, trembling into tears, and laying her hand tenderly on his shoulder: "I am very glad you have broached this sad subject to me, though I am sorry that you have cause for doing so. I have been long grieving over it; but I should have been doubly unhappy had I known that your dear mind was disturbed at the same time. I declare there is a strange sympathetic union between us which is wonderfully mysterious,—a sort of Siamese bond, I may say. Our minds having been engaged over the same delicate matter at the same time, clearly proves to me the oneness of our natures, and the strikingly similar mould of our minds. O, Christopher! my treasured brother! would that we were in some happier clime, where the sun of our bliss would never be dimmed by the clouds of domestic griefs, like that which now saddens our mutual hearts, and makes my young life a dreary winter! Would that we could fly away like the swallows!"

"Bless your heart! I couldn't fly away anywhere now, Juley, I've too much business on hand," said Christopher, melting under the warmth and gentle pressure of her cheek, which was lovingly rested on his right shoulder. "But don't be downhearted, you know, as the 'Calabash's' sailors used to sing. I am sorry I mentioned this delicate matter; but three gallons of whisky in a week is really too much for any quiet family to consume; in fact, it is coming it rather too strong, you know, Juley."

"I shudder when I think of it, dearest; but what can I do? I have hitherto concealed the fact from you, that I am at present dependent upon my aunt. Alas! I feel my position keenly, and bitterly do I mourn for my poor Pa. When my Chancery suit is decided, I shall come in for a large property, and shall then, of course, be free to say what I choose to anybody; but in the

mean time I must submit to things I cannot control. 'Hard is the fate of the infirm and poor,' as the poet says. I am at present debarred from property by the owner; my bright prospects are obscured by the avarice of an obstinate man; but law is law, and"——

"There, don't grieve, Juley," said Christopher, kissing her fondly, "you shall not want for a pound so long as I have a purse in my pocket. Come, flare up, Juley."

"Precious fellow! How can I thank you for all your kindness? But hear me a minute longer, dearest. I told you before, you know, that poor aunty had little eccentric ways,—infirmities of the flesh, as she calls them,—and the habit you have so tenderly alluded to is one of them. I am shocked to admit it; but it is too plain to be denied. Aunty *does* get excited sometimes. You came home at an unfortunate hour this morning; and saw that fight, which I was very sorry for; but I must take aunty's part, and say that she was justified in belabouring old mother Rouse with the prop; for she nearly scalded my cat to death with cabbage water, for merely getting on her back shed. But dear aunty is a kind, loving creature, after all: she would do anything for anybody, and she dotes on you. I cannot forget her goodness to me when I was a little lone orphan, after poor Pa's death. For my sake, then, lovey, have patience with dear aunty, and bear with her little oddities. You will, now, won't you? My own generous, noble-hearted brother! For my sake you will wink at her weakness. Wont you, lovey?"

Julia said that with such a gush of sisterly love in her looks, and with her arms so tenderly entwined around his neck, that he could not help promising to wink at anything in the world for her sake; for he confessed he loved her madly. In proof of his assertion, he hastened into Pitt Street, and soon returned with about twenty pounds' worth of the "loveliest jewellery that Julia had ever set eyes on;" for which she poured out a torrent of acknowledgments which actually melted him to tears.

From that day forward his mind was bent on making Julia independent of Aunt Gorgier; in short, on making her Mrs. Cockle. The hints she had so innocently dropped about her large property probably had a stimulating influence on his benevolence; for he liked property: but love was certainly the strongest incentive. His heart had gradually grown full of passion for Julia; and upon carefully analysing it, he found it to be of a totally different quality to the affection he felt for his sister Sophy.

His first bungling attempt to express his heart's desires was successful ; for Julia, like a delicate, loving creature, anticipated his wishes, and quickly terminated his embarrassment by throwing herself into his arms, and telling him she "would be his faithful, devoted wife for ever." An interesting struggle ensued, between love and duty, as to whether she ought not first to consult the Master in Chancery ; but that was at length decided, and the wedding day was fixed by Aunt Gorger for that day month,—the old lady tritely remarking, that "the Master in Chancery might go and put his head in a bag."

Of course there was additional furniture required for the house, which Aunt Gorger promised to select, and Christopher promised to pay for. Julia's wedding *trousseau* was to be procured, too ; and as Aunt's rents had not yet come in, Christopher was, in a moment, induced to advance fifty pounds, which were to be repaid to him with thanks.

By mutual agreement, the approaching marriage was to be kept a profound secret ; and the necessary preliminaries were to be made as unobtrusively as possible. That important matter having been arranged, they all went to work with their respective preparations. Aunt Gorger was soon very busy getting new carpets and curtains, and everything else new that she fancied, including a new piano ; though Julia admitted she could only play two tunes, with one finger.

Christopher shuddered all over, as from time to time Aunt Gorger demanded more money, and assured him,—if he hesitated for an instant,—“that every blessed thing she had bought was indispensable, and that she was going to work in the cheapest manner possible.” She also hinted, in her broad way, that “people could not expect to get married without expense.”

“I say, Juley, I don't think there was any occasion for aunt's buying a new drawing-room suite, and that great lumbering cabinet,” said Christopher one morning, while scanning his eyes over another bill, for which Mrs. Gorger had asked him to leave a cheque before he went out. “I declare, Juley, I've paid more than £300 already ; and many of the things are not required, I am sure, any more than I want a strait-jacket. I should like to know what we are going to do with that expensive dinner service, or those two cases of stuffed birds ; and as for that shower-bath, I actually shiver when I even look at it. I remember the only time I took a shower-bath was at Uncle Peter's house ; and the shock of the cold water frightened

me so, that I roared out ; and all the servants came running into the room to see what was the matter, and annoyed me very much. I seldom or never bathe ; so what's the use of a bath to me, I should like to know ? I wish you'd speak to aunty, Juley, and ask her to be more careful ; for I am not made of money, you know."

"You are made of material a thousand times better than money, my precious," said Julia, patting his cheek, and kissing him. But don't vex dear aunty just now, love ; for she thinks she is doing so much for our comfort, and she is very high-spirited, though she does sometimes use low expressions. I shall have plenty of money by and by ; then it will be all yours, you know, my pet ;—all yours the moment you get it."

Christopher smiled a ghastly smile, and mentally wished he might get it soon ; then wrote out another cheque for £74. 5s., remarking, as he did so, that he must get his agent to melt another bill to-morrow, for he was getting "hard up" for ready money.

At that moment a lad from Mr. Thugman's office brought him a letter, which he hastily opened, and, as he read it, he turned pale and red alternately. Presently he tossed the letter to Julia, and sat down and wept.

It was from Uncle Nicholas, and was evidently prompted by genuine affection. It told of the anxiety of himself and family in Christopher's behalf, on account of their not hearing from him, or of him, since he left their house. It also contained many gentle admonitions and cautions as to his pursuits, and the choice of his associates in Sydney, as well as much solid, Christian-like counsel in general. It specially commended the "Proverbs of Solomon" to his careful study, as a collection of inestimable, moral precepts, which were admirably adapted for the guidance of young persons—and old persons, too—in the various walks of every-day life. The letter further stated that the writer was coming to Sydney by the next steamer, and kindly invited Christopher to prepare to return with him to Cockleton, where he would be warmly welcomed ; and where certain plans would be proposed to him for his advantageously settling in the country. It concluded with messages of love from all the family ; and a postscript was added by his Aunt, telling of a sure cure for the warts on his hands, and advising him to take to his flannels, as the weather was beginning to get cold.

"What do you think of that epistle, Juley ?" snivelled.

Christopher, after she had finished reading it, and had tossed it contemptuously on the table.

"Why, I think your uncle is a puritanical old humbug, and I think his family are vipers; that's plump and plain," said Julia, with far more spirit than Christopher had ever seen her before exhibit. It's clear to me that he wants to wheedle you back to marry your cousin Polly,—the detestable little native cat,—and, perhaps, to take his old dairy, or one of his farms, just to fleece you of your money, and make a slave of you for life. That's my opinion, as you have asked for it. I hate the whole of them for their abominable stiffness to you; and I should just like to tell them my mind, especially that vixen Polly.

"If you will take my advice, lovey, you will not see the sly old schemer at all, nor yet reply to his hypocritical letter. You said, the other day, that you wanted to go up to the station; so you had better go at once, and give the old sinner the slip; then, when he comes to town, he can look till he finds you."

"Ah, but if I go to the station now, I shall not be back in time to be married, Juley. No, no, that plan won't do. I would not put off that happy event for all the stations on the Billybong. We can go up and see old Shicer after we are wedded, and we can spend the honeymoon at Diddler's Plains. Won't Sam stare to see us? Ha, ha, ha! I fancy I see him drop his pipe with astonishment. Stay, I've got an idea, Juley, it's just come into my head: I will be off to-night to see Mr. Toddle, a gentleman who came out with me in the 'Calabash.' He gave me a strong invitation to his house, whenever I liked to go. I can spend a few weeks with him, and return here in time to make you my wife for life, Juley.

"Yes, that's what I'll do," continued Christopher, brightening up, as he saw the way out of his difficulty. "I'll go and arrange my business affairs; and tell my agent, if Uncle Nick inquires for me at his office, to tell him I have gone as a Missionary to Patagonia. Ha! ha! ha! That will send him back to Cockleorum Hall singing, 'O be joyful;' for he is fond of Missionaries. In fact, I think one of my cousins is engaged to a young parson who is preparing for the mission work."

"Don't let your uncle come here, that's all; or I will scratch his eyes out, the old crocodile," said Julia, with a vehemence that quite startled Christopher; which perceiving, she coaxingly passed her arm round his neck, and kissed his features into loving smirks in a minute, though he certainly

could not help blushing a little, to see that she did not blush at all.....

That evening, Christopher went on board a steamer bound to the Nimrod river; and next morning he landed at the pleasant little township of Frogs' Flat. He soon found Mr. Toddle's abode, which was a snug little box enveloped in roses and evergreen creepers, while within it were homely comforts, as well as luxuries in abundance.

Christopher received a cordial welcome from Mr. and Mrs. Toddle; and was soon sitting down to a substantial breakfast, and chatting with his host about their fellow passengers by the "Calabash."

He was shocked to learn that one poor fellow—a ruined gamester—had committed suicide in Victoria: that another had gone mad: and that a third (a very worthy man) had died suddenly. He also heard that young Bibbs had run through all his money, and had almost ruined his health in doing so. The career of some others was not very pleasing to contemplate; but of others he heard a very cheering account, especially of the Rev. Mr. Racey, who was foremost among the popular and useful Ministers in the land.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

CONTAINS Description of Frogs' Flat and Mr. Toddle. Kangaroo Hunting, and other interesting Matters. Mr. Doloreaux Dryazsoot's Experience.

FROGS' FLAT was a thriving little town, pleasantly situated on the right bank of the Nimrod river. At the first glance almost any tasteful person would be struck with its rural beauties, and with the idea that peace and quietude were surely to be found in that cosy neighbourhood. Viewed from the river, its verdant background presented a picturesque softness most enticing to the dusty citizen, whose mind had worn weary with daily business routine, and whose head was aching with the incessant din of cart wheels, street cries, and intolerable street music.

Mr. Toddle was rustivating—as he called it—for a few months, after many years of enervating toil in the commercial world; and was trying, in his way, to resuscitate his weakened faculties, prior to recommencing some active duties; for he was the reverse of an idle man, and he held it as a principle, that no man, if blessed with health, was justified in living an inactive life; nor could he do so with safety.

Mr. Toddle maintained that moderate out-of-door exercise, with careful regimen, was cheaper than physic, and far more pleasant and more efficacious in remedying such disorders as he was suffering from. He kept a little yacht, fitted with every convenience for fishing or pic-nic excursions. He also kept a few well-bred hack horses, and a pair of pointers for quail shooting, and he took occasional exercise in his garden and orchard.

If any drowsy visitor at first sight supposed that the refreshing stillness of Frogs' Flat arose from the fact of there being no one in it to make a noise, he would soon be undeceived, especially if Saint Patrick's Day were near at hand. The river being the principal thoroughfare for traffic, the grass had a chance of growing on the streets; thus saving the inhabitants from dust in their eyes, and an unpleasant din in their

ears, beside adding to the great beauty of the town. It was rather a populous neighbourhood, and Mr. Toddle had no lack of genial society.

There was homely accommodation in the "Birdcage" for a limited number of visitors; and Mr. Toddle had no difficulty in finding friends who were willing to escape from the battle of city life to share his hospitality for a while; indeed, it sometimes taxed his gudewife's domestic talents to find board and lodging for them all. "Wealth maketh many friends; but the poor is separated from his neighbour." The former part of that proverb Mr. Toddle *then* realized; but it was left for him in after years to experience the truth of the latter part.

As Mr. Toddle delighted in giving his holiday-seeking guests as much variety of country recreation as possible, he, in addition to his boating excursions and shooting parties, occasionally arranged for a kangaroo hunt. (The backwoods of Frogs' Flat abounded with game.) His trusty friend, young Roslyn, was always ready with his well-trained kangaroo dogs; and if the jovial hunters did not generally overtake much game, they had plenty of sport in making game of each other's minor mishaps in their helter-skelter chase through the bush, or their occasional foot races after their horses.

It was pleasant to see a party of well mounted, well dressed, frolicsome townsmen start out after breakfast from the Birdcage, headed by Mr. Toddle and his friend Roslyn, (a prince of bushmen,) and a pack of impatient hounds in the rear. And it was comical enough to see the sportsmen return in the evening, with damaged saddles and bridles, tattered garments, hatless heads; and persons smutty as colliers, with riding through brushwood, blackened by recent running fires. It was refreshing to see their merry smiles through the clouds of soot and dust on their faces, and to hear their spirited hunting songs; though they had perhaps only seen the tails of a few kangaroos, and captured one infant wallaby, which its dam had dropped in her flight. It was amusing, too, to hear their talk over the dinner table about the pleasures of the chase, considering their damaged looks, and the fact that their previous hunting experience had been confined to hunting the slipper at a juvenile Christmas party, or to chasing the rats and mice in their city offices or chambers. However they had had an exciting ride through the bush, and had been a dozen times in danger of breaking their bones, and that is perhaps what the majority of pseudo-huntsmen would consider prime sport; especially if they had actually sighted

game ; or, better still, had captured an animal worth three-pence.

But pray don't mistake, reader ; it was not the fault of their undaunted leader, Mr. Roslyn, or his well-bred dogs, that they did not run down all the kangaroos they saw ; but the dread of losing his straggling party in the bush compelled him to keep in sight of them ; consequently, he was soon out of sight of the game. It is said that "mettle is dangerous in a blind horse ;" and the mettle which the exhilarating exercise usually put into Mr. Toddle's city friends was at times highly dangerous to them. Still no serious mishap ever occurred, though there were often comical ones worthy of the magical pencils of George Cruikshank, or some of "Punch's" talented artistic staff.

Christopher had only one slight taste of that sort of sport, and he did not like it at all. Soon after starting, he and his horse differed in opinion as to the proper side to pass a gum sapling, and the consequence was, Christopher was knocked out of the saddle. He limped back to the Birdcage, to repair his grazed leg with sticking-plaister, while his horse followed the hounds without a rider. But he had many quiet excursions with Mr. Toddle ; and on these occasions that gentleman usually contrived to seize on passing circumstances to convey some useful practical lesson to his inexperienced young friend, illustrating his remarks with amusing stories of life in the city and the bush, which the youth listened to with apparent interest. If he did not really appreciate Mr. Toddle's discourses, he always said he did ; and that was sufficient to stimulate that gentleman into a communicative mood.

"How is your health in general, Mr. Cockle?" asked Mr. Toddle, one day, as they were slowly sailing down the river in his boat. "I have remarked that you do not look as strong as you did when I first saw you on board the 'Calabash.'"

"I'm pretty well, thankee, Sir—hem—that is to say, I have been much better than usual during the two weeks I have spent with you. I think the air of Frogs' Flat is very salubrious, and the milk is very mild and pure, compared with that we get in Sydney. But I certainly don't feel so healthy as I used to do in England ; and I am sure the climate disagrees with me."

"Humph ! the climate is often blamed without reason. In my opinion there is not a better climate under the sun than ours, upon the whole ; and it is highly suitable to persons of delicate constitutions. But why do you think this climate does not suit you ?"

"O I don't know," said Christopher, yawning. "I'm not so plucky as I used to be, that's certain; I'm getting as soft as a soused fish, as father used to say."

"Indeed! that is a bad condition, certainly. I wish you would explain your symptoms a little more definitely," said Mr. Toddle, kindly. "I am not a doctor, you know; still I have some common-sense notions of treating simple disorders, which I have picked up, with other scraps of practical wisdom, in my wanderings. Tell me how you feel, and perhaps I can prescribe a remedy for you. Depend on it, if I see you are beyond the reach of simple appliances, I will not interfere with your case; for I am thoroughly averse to quacking in any shape; and I have a contempt for those meddlers who pretend to know as much about the nature of diseases as doctors, who have made the healing art their chief study. A celebrated authority gives his definition of a physician as 'an unfortunate gentleman, who is every day expected to perform a miracle, viz., to reconcile health with intemperance.' I believe that is correct, too; but tell me, Mr. Cockle, as clearly as you can, how you feel, and I will give you my advice, gratis, and shall not be offended if you don't take it."

"Well, Sir, I feel particularly low-spirited, and ready to hang myself, as it were. When I first awake in the morning, my mouth is usually as dry as an old shoe—as Tim Rafferty would say; and my hand shakes so that I am afraid to touch my razor, until I steady myself with a little stimulant; and that does not help me very long. Then I often feel a strange oppression just below my chest, especially after dinner or supper. Sometimes my head aches and my eyes are quite weak and bloodshot, and I feel so low and depressed, that I am ready to cry if anybody speaks cross to me. Besides, I feel"——

"Excuse me for interrupting you; but you have told me enough, Sir. I think I understand your case pretty well; indeed, I could have told you all you have told me, by merely looking at you; and I will engage to cure you, too, without even a dose of physic, if you will stay with me, or strictly follow my prescriptions, for a few months."

"Hem—I could not possibly stay with you, Sir; thank you all the same. I must go back to Sydney in ten days at farthest, for I have important business to transact; but I shall be much obliged to you for your advice, for I know you wish me well."

"You shall have it as freely and as honestly as if you were my

own son," said Mr. Toddle. "You perhaps have heard the story of Dr. Abernethy, who one day went to visit a gouty gentleman; and after a short parley, the patient said, testily, 'I wish you to strike directly at the cause of my disease, Doctor.' 'I will, Sir,' said the blunt physician; and at the same time he up with his stick, and knocked a decanter of spirits off the table beside the sick man: then said, in his laconic way, 'I have struck the cause of your disease, Sir.'

"Pardon me for speaking plainly, Mr. Cockle; but I think I could as easily strike at one cause of your disease. It is a sad thing to say to a young gentleman; but I should not be your friend, if I withheld the opinion, that your immoderate indulgence in stimulants is shattering your nervous system, and, if continued, will prostrate you altogether; for your constitution would not bear it long. Your improved health, since you have stayed with me, is mainly owing to your abstinence from stimulants; and if you continue to abstain from them, and devote your energies to some steady, useful pursuit, I promise you all those disagreeable symptoms you have complained of will speedily vanish.

"But I would, at the same time, warn you against another habit which I see you indulge in immoderately. I mean smoking. It may seem somewhat inconsistent for me to caution you on this subject; but I do so from a settled conviction that it is pernicious to all persons of your nervous temperament. I always strongly advise boys not to learn to smoke; and I with equal earnestness try to persuade young men, who have acquired the *art*, to abandon it at once, before it settles into a confirmed habit, which every one knows is difficult to master. Instances of old men thoroughly conquering the habit of smoking are rare, because it has become a sort of second nature to them; and it would be as painful as wrenching their noses off to take their pipes from them. Many of the poor old fellows, as they smoke, sigh over their hopeless slavery. With young men the habit has not got so firm a hold upon them but that, by a strong effort of their vigorous young minds, they might snap the enthralling chain, and pursue their way up life's ladder with unshaken nerves.

"Dr. Clarke once remarked, that 'if he wished to make a present to the devil, it should be a pig stuffed with tobacco.' Now I don't sympathize with the worthy Doctor's savage declamation against pigs and pigtail; so don't misunderstand me, Mr. Cockle," continued Mr. Toddle. "I would not join in a

crusade for the total extermination of the weed, or knock the pipes out of the mouths of sailors, soldiers, or bushmen, or any other men of robust habit, if they enjoyed a smoke in moderation. On the contrary, I would help to get them a supply of *good* tobacco, and save them from being imposed upon, as they frequently are, when far away from means of supply, and forced to smoke rotten, unmarketable rubbish. I never knew the use of the pipe cause a man to beat his wife, starve his children, or hang himself, (as the habit I last alluded to has often done,) or I would endorse Dr. Clarke's sentiments in a moment. In short, I don't believe that smoking is sinful.

"I delight in seeing a healthy old man enjoy his evening pipe, or his pipe after dinner, if he has time to spare for it. I love to see a weather-beaten 'Jack tar' quietly puffing his cutty, under the lee of the long boat, in a gale of wind; or to see a jaded bushman solacing himself with a whiff, beside his camp fire, after a weary day's journey. But whenever I see a young man, of such highly-nervous temperament as yourself, with the pipe in his mouth a dozen times in a day; or whenever I see a young student sitting up by the midnight lamp poring over his books, and filling pipe after pipe, until the atmosphere of his studio is as dense as London in November, I cannot help shuddering for his poor quivering nerves and his bemuddled brain; and I see in him the making of a miserable old man before he is past life's meridian.

"From a personal acquaintance with the encroaching nature of the habit, and the difficulty of subduing it, after many years' indulgence in it, I would emphatically advise you, Mr. Cockle, to pluck up courage, and say at once,—

' Though the pipe has a mystical spell,
I'm determin'd to break it this day;
So to smoking for ever farewell,
I'll a free man's true spirit display.'

Say that right out, with manly resolution, and at the same time crush the pipe beneath your heel, as you would do the head of a snake, that was trying to bite you. I would strongly recommend all young men to do the same."

Snuffing, too, is an insidious practice, which often settles into a confirmed habit, for which it would be hard for any one to show me a satisfactory excuse. I was in great danger of acquiring the habit many years ago, when engaged in a

lawyer's office, where there were half-a-dozen other young men; every one of whom carried his snuff-box, though some of them had not quite learned to snuff without sneezing. For my part, I would rather have a brass band or a barrel organ under my study window, (and they are intolerable nuisances,) than sit in company with an inveterate snuffer, whose time is divided between loading his nostrils with dust, and blowing 'trumpet metre' on his pocket handkerchief.

"I merely make these remarks *en passant*, Mr. Cockle. I know you are not afflicted with the snuffing mania; but listen for a minute to a little episode, showing the influence of the habit on domestic peace. Don't fancy it is one of my imaginary sketches; for I know dear little Harry, and his worthy Papa, and his darling Mamma, better than I know you, Sir."

POOR OLD FELLOW! HE HAS GOT NO SNUFF!

"MAMMA," cried Young Harry, "do tell me, I pray,
What makes poor Papa so unhappy to-day;
When I met him just now, and said, 'Kiss me, Pa, dear,'
He turn'd sharply round, and took hold of my ear.

"Just then our dog Charley, Pa's pet, as you know,
Came running and frisking, his fondness to show;
Pa gave him a comfortless kick on the tail,
Which made him set up a most woe-stricken wail.

"Jemima, the servant—a very good maid—
Has, somehow or other, the dinner delay'd;
Pa told her just now to make haste with his victuals,
Or else he'd upset all her saucepans and kettles.

"Has he got a bad toothache, or tic-doloureux?
A boil on his back, or a nail in his shoe?
A troublesome corn, or a fly up his nose?
Or has Maggie, the mare, put her foot on his toes?

"Ma, what is the matter? do tell me, I pray;
My heart is so sad, I can't relish my play;
Has he met with some dreadful disaster or loss?
Is he ill? is he crazy? what makes him so cross?"

"Hush, Harry, my precious!" his mother replied,
As she tenderly drew the sweet boy to her side,
Then stroked back the curls from his finely form'd brow,
And hugg'd him as all such fond mothers know how.

"Cheer up now, my darling, and dry up your tears,"
(And she gave a sweet smile, which assuaged all his fears,)
"I'll tell you why Pa's so unusually gruff,
He has come home from town, and forgotten his snuff."

"You are now suffering from dyspeptic symptoms, Mr. Cockle, that is quite clear to me," continued Mr. Toddle; "and if you do not apply timely remedies, you will gradually grow worse; and I scarcely know of a more miserable affliction than that, when it assumes a chronic form,—in fact, it is incipient madness. The best things in life would fail to delight a dyspeptic man; indeed, if all his friends were jointly to try to make him good-tempered, even for a single day, they would be as unsuccessful as if they attempted to make an elephant stand on his head, or a sea-horse dance in a circus. By the by I will give you some of the dearly-bought experience of a wretched sufferer from that malady, if you would like to hear it, Sir."

Christopher sighed, and said he would very much like to hear it, "in order to judge if it was any way like the horrible miseries he himself had endured for many months past."

Mr. Toddle then recited the following jingling lines, which convey more than one moral worth reflecting on, though the composition may be condemned as unclassical. I hope the reader will not impatiently exclaim, "Ugh, doggrel!" and throw it away in scorn, after scanning over the first verse. At any rate I would recommend a careful perusal of the last verse, and a practical application of the sentiment it embodies.

THE WOES AND WORRIES OF MR. DOLOREAU DRYAZSOOT, A DYSPEPTIC MAN.

OF all the disorders to which man is heir,
Dyspepsia I vow is the worst:
Not the body alone, but the mind t'will impair;
'Twill make one as surly and cross as a bear,
And think he is specially curst.

Than tell *all* the troubles through which I have been,
I would rather be duck'd in a drain.
If I glance at a few, p'rhaps my aim will be seen,
And some woe-begone wight, with disease of the spleen,
May feel his hope kindle again.

I once was as strong as an ironbark log,
But losses and crosses and care
Soon made me as thin as a blackfellow's dog,
And as bother'd as Paddy stuck fast in a bog,
Or a bull in the midst of a fair.

Suppose, if, while turning a corner sharp round,
 You met a grim muzzleless bear,
 Your hair would stand straight up on end, I'll be bound,
 And you'd shiver and shake like a tailor half-drown'd;
Thus I felt at each noise I would hear.

* * * *

Each organ I have was deranged;
 (Let the sceptical titter or frown;)
 My whole constitution was changed,
 And my inside was turn'd upside down.

I was cross as a lord with the gout,
 If you happen to tread on his toes;
 As a boar with a ring in his snout,
 Or a pilgrim with peas in his shoes;

As a student by street music teased,
 Or by brass-fitters working with files;
 As a fiddler whose bow has been greased,
 Or a poet with cats on his tiles;

As a teething or newly-wean'd child,
 Or a gourmand disturb'd at his meals;
 As a bull running wickedly wild,
 With a posse of curs at his heels.

I'd a woe-begone, sad, sour look,
 As though I had fed upon sorrel;
 With all in my house—save the cook—
 I'd argue, and grumble, and quarrel.

My head was bemuddled, and thick
 As the block of a barber or hatter;
 At trouble my heart grew quite sick,
 And I dreaded all business-like clatter.

Oft I'd sigh—Could I purchase some little green isle
 In the midst of the ocean, alone,
 There, away from the world, with its noise and its guile,
 I'd ramble about in the primitive style,
 Till my carcase with healthfulness shone.

There I'd laugh at the fashions, and if it were hot,
 In Adam's first style I'd appear,
 And under a tree I would quietly squat,
 Or stroll at my leisure, and not care a jot,
 Though the monkeys should mockingly leer.

There I'd choose my own diet, and choose my own time
 To breakfast, to dine, or to sup;
 The rocks should re-echo my praises in rhyme
 Of liberty, peace, or such subjects sublime,
 And with comfort I'd fill up my cup.

Here I seldom had peace, though for quiet I'd pine,
 For friends would "drop in" all the day;
 To "rally me up" one would ask me to dine,
 And say, if I took an allowance of wine,
 I'd be strong as a horse in a dray.

And, because very rarely I roar'd at my pain,
 Small sympathy fell to my share;
 I was teased with advice until almost insane,
 And turn'd out at daylight to walk the Domain,
 And feast on the fresh morning air.

Said a friend—"Take a shower-bath, morning and eve,
 And sweat as you rub yourself dry."
 "Turkish baths," said another, "I really believe,
 Is the treatment alone your disease will relieve;
 Now let me advise you to try."

"Eat no animal food," said another wise head,
 "But live upon cabbage alone."

"I'd advise just a grill'd mutton chop with some bread,"
 Said another, "and always go early to bed;
 For you quite to a shadow have grown."

Another search'd "Graham," and found out a cure,
 And forced me to follow his course.
 Of mixtures as nauseous as stuff from a sewer,
 And boluses, powders, and pills, I am sure,
 I swallow'd a load for a horse.

With quinine and *steel drops*, and valerian too,
 My poor groaning system was ground,
 Till I felt such a horrible racking, as though
 I'd a whole cutler's shop in my regions below,
 And a grindstone were fast turning round.

* * * * *

But I'll stay; though my miseries would fill up a page
 As long as the pile on Hyde Park.*
 Than have them return, I would rather engage
 To meet a mad tiger just out of his cage,
 Or fight with a shovel-nose shark.

Till I went to a doctor, an eminent man,
 (My delay I've had cause to bewail.)
 And thanks to his skill and his rational plan,
 I soon got as frisky as frogs in a pan,
 Or a cat with a bell at her tail.

I then went to work, and with joy-mingled wonder
 I hail'd the return of my peace;
 And since my phantasmas have "all knuckled under,"
 I'm mild as the moonbeams contrasted with thunder,
 And body and soul are at ease.

* A remarkable pillar which ornaments the western side of Hyde Park, Sydney.

The moral of these rugged rhymes you will see,
 If you'll study the stanza below;
 And if some poor wretch who from madness would flee,
 Would follow my plan, he'd soon feel himself free,
 And light as the breezes that blow.

An abundance of work for both body and mind
 Is the very best cure for the vapours;
 And that in this city each seeker may find
 In helping the "lame, and the halt, and the blind,"
 And a blessing will follow such labours.

"There you see, Mr. Cockle, the most effectual remedy my afflicted friend found for his malady was work, active employment for both body and mind," continued Mr. Toddle, after he had read the foregoing stanzas. "Depend on it, Sir, that is indeed 'the very best cure for the vapours,' and I earnestly advise you to try it. The following good maxims were impressed upon me in earlier life, and I know you will bear with me, if I recite them. 'If you would relish your food, work for it: if you would enjoy your raiment, pay for it: and if you would sleep soundly, take a clear conscience to bed with you.'

"But I think you said just now, Mr. Cockle, that you had important business affairs in Sydney to attend to. I do not intend to be obtrusive; but I would like to ask you if you have any business which causes you over-anxiety; for that is as likely to breed dyspepsia as overdoses of brandy-and-water, the excessive abuse of tobacco, or lazy habits in general."

"I have no cause for real anxiety, Sir," said Christopher, hesitatingly. "I have embarked in a good many speculations, certainly; but I have reason to believe they will make me a rich man very soon. I am not flush of ready cash just at present, but that does not worry me a bit; for my agent can manage to 'raise the wind'—as he calls it—at any time. He says I am considered a 'first-rate mark' in Sydney, and he can exchange my bills with half a score of persons without the least trouble."

"Humph! I think I understand you," said Mr. Toddle, with an ominous shrug and a very serious look. "I will not seek to pry further into your business transactions, Mr. Cockle; but if you will listen, I will tell you a little story, showing how an intimate friend of mine fared through adopting the disreputable mode of raising money which I apprehend you have been innocently allured into. And allow me to add this friendly caution, Sir. Beware of accommodation bills, as you would beware of accommodation houses, wherein bushrangers are furtively harboured."

CHAPTER XXXIX.

MR. TODDLE'S Story of his Friend Simon Gudgeon's Experience in "Kite-flying," or "Raising the Wind," Something for young Traders to study.

"THE dangers of a cyclone, or a typhoon, are terrible enough, as I well know ; still, to my mind, they are less to be dreaded than the dangers to the moral and social well-being of society, which are attendant on that treacherous mode of financial manœuvring vulgarly called 'raising the wind.' It is a species of jugglery which is, or should be, condemned and shunned by every prudent man, because it is—like all other disreputable schemes—fraught with peril, and very frequently entails ruin upon individuals, and embarrassment to communities."

Thus soliloquized my old friend, Simon Gudgeon, one evening as he sat in my sanctum, in a moralizing mood ; and after receiving my assent to his irrefragable propositions, he added, "Now I think of it, Mr. Toddle, I will tell you how I fared on my first attempt at raising the wind, when I was a boy ; if you will have patience to listen."

I promised to listen attentively : so he then began his story.

"In happy days of yore, when I was innocent of any other system of 'kite-flying' than the one adopted by little boys in general, I was returning home from school one day in company with half a dozen light-hearted lads like myself, with our little blue bags filled with books over our shoulders, when we espied a crowd of people on a plot of waste ground, a short distance from the main thoroughfare. Of course we hurried to see 'what was the matter?'—which is like human nature in all ages ; and when we arrived there, we saw an itinerant juggler or conjurer, dressed in Merry Andrew's costume, in the centre of a magic circle, and surrounded by an assortment of conjuring tools and implements of trickery, with which he was performing a variety of sleight-of-hand hocus-pocus, to the great astonishment of his audience, who from time to time expressed their

admiration in encouraging guffaws. After he had apparently swallowed ribbon enough to trim a good many bonnets,—besides a sword, a watchman's rattle, a Dutch cheese, and a few other indigestible little articles,—and had performed many marvellous feats, which more than half impressed the bystanders with the belief that he was either Satan himself, or one of his clever colleagues; (for conjurers were not so common in those days as they are now;) he looked straight towards the spot where my schoolfellows and I were standing, and asked, in a supernatural tone of voice, which seemed to ooze out of his boots,

“Which of you little noblemen will be my fool? Who will be honorary *aide-de-camp* to the great wizard, Rhomptiphostikos?”

“There was an immediate rush forward by the boys; each one being as anxious for the distinction as if it were a fat sinecure. ‘I will! I will! Take me, Sir! No, no, me, Sir!’ was vociferated by their shrill voices, accompanied with eager gesticulations, like young monkeys in a menagerie begging for gingerbread nuts from a chuckling group of juveniles. How forcibly I have been reminded of that scene when, on many subsequent occasions, I have seen *older boys* impetuously racing for posts of honour, of the duties of which they were as ignorant as were those panting schoolboys of the cabalistic signs in the magical circle of Mr. Rhomptiphostikos!

“‘I can’t take you all, my bald-faced Lilliputians,’ cried the conjurer; ‘one fool at a time is enough even for a wizard to manage. Hi! you with the clean shirt, white frill, a long nose, and a curly wig; walk this way. Drop your bread and cheese bag, Sir, and don your cap of office. You are the biggest little fool I ever swallowed. You beat my apprentice, Silly Billy, all to nutshells.’

“I thought fortune specially smiled upon me on that lucky morning; for I was the person addressed in those flattering terms,—in short, the successful candidate. I was at once installed within the magic ring, and had an extraordinary long name given to me, which I have forgotten. I was then commanded by the conjuror to open my mouth wide, and repeat some unpronounceable sentences after him; and while I was attempting to do so, some of the bystanders declared they saw a pint pot go down my throat, and come out of my jacket pocket. After I had been put through a variety of marvellous processes, to the expressed satisfaction of the conjurer, and to the great merriment of the beholders, my preceptor produced three tin mugs, apparently

empty, and, after a good deal of jargon, addressed to the mugs, or to the supposed spirits within them, he placed one of them in my hands, and ordered me to blow like a young whale.

"Accordingy, I blew into the mug ; but without any perceptible result.

" ' Pooh ! you don't blow hard enough,' said the conjurer, as he handed me another mug. ' Blow into this one, and say, ' Swell.' Blow hard ; and if you blow your brains out, I'll put them in again for nothing.'

" I did blow hard, and said, ' Swell,' when, to my amazement, a large red potato rolled out of the mug.

" ' That's better,' said the conjurer, approvingly. ' You'll make a clever fellow yet ; you'll be a regular roarer at raising the wind by and by. Try again now ; here's another mug ; blow your best into it, and shout ' Gilbert.' "

" I did blow my best into the mug ; but before I could shout ' Gilbert,' I was covered with soot : my face, my clean frill, my shirt front, and my nankeen waistcoat, were as black as a sweep's nightcap.

" ' Hallo !' cried the conjurer, ' you blew too hard that time. You are quite black in the face. Why didn't you say ' Gilbert ?' "

" ' Tchah tchah ! Let me go ! Let me go !' I sneezingly exclaimed, as I seized my little blue bag, amidst the uproarious mirth of the crowd, and ran home as fast as I could ; and when I arrived there, instead of sympathy, I got a severe scolding for being silly enough to volunteer for a conjurer's fool.

" The soot was soon washed off my face, but its moral effects were not soon effaced from my mind. That little incident made a strong impression on me, Mr. Toddle, I assure you ; and my teasing schoolfellows assisted me to remember it every day for many months. I firmly resolved never again to blow into conjurers' pots ; never to voluntarily play the fool to any trickster, nor again to have anything to do with legerdemain.

" Well, Sir, I kept those prudent resolutions in view for many years ; I was as shy of conjurers as young bush horses are of brass bands and donkeys ; and wizards were associated in my memory with everything that it is advisable to avoid. I never even looked into a tin pot without thinking of Gilbert, and wondering who he could be, and what mysterious connexion he had with the soot, which had so wofully begrimed my person, and nearly choked me besides ; but I never could solve the enigma satisfactorily. I conclude, however, that the conjurer

thus victimized me for the sake of the *écât* it would procure him with his grinning audience. I have many times since seen modest persons' feelings lacerated by inveterate witlings, who would sacrifice their best friends for the sake of a joke; and I have on such occasions heartily wished Gilbert were near to begrime those irrational plagues, or to buffet them with his soot bag.

"Happy would it have been for me if a little of that soot had remained on my phiz, as a perpetual reminder of my first attempt at puffing; if it would have saved me from the more disastrous results of experiments in raising the wind in after-life, which I will tell you of, if you like, Mr. Toddle."

"By all means," I replied. "I feel vastly interested in your recital; and I doubt not it will point a useful moral."

"Well, Sir," continued my friend, "I dare say you knew old Magus Grabit, of the late firm of Grabit and Son, Sydney. Most folks in the city knew that pure old specimen. Ah, you knew him, I can see by your shrugs. Well, never mind telling me what *you* know of him just now; allow me to tell you a very small bit of my experience with him, just for the sake of illustrating the dangers of 'bill dodging,' or 'raising the wind.' Don't ask me, if you please, how I first became acquainted with Magus; for it would only shock your feelings if I were to tell you, and it might do harm to a cause which I would die to serve. Suffice it to say, I knew him; and it was pretty palpable that he knew me. I soon found that he was within a magic circle, on 'Tom Tidler's ground, picking up gold and silver,'—as the boys say; and I was induced to go into the ring, and be his fool. You will perceive the old story of the conjurer again, without the soot-pot. In plain terms, Mr. Grabit was one of a host of wind-raisers, or kite-flyers,—which-ever term you like.

"For a short time, I thought Magus Grabit one of the most straightforward old gentlemen that I ever had the good fortune to meet; a thorough 'John Bull,' with a double allowance of benevolence; an experienced old stager, whose sympathy and counsel would assist a poor halting pilgrim, like myself, along the rough by-ways of life; and I congratulated myself on having fallen in with such a nice friend, at a time when I very much needed sound, friendly counsel.

"Well, Sir, one morning I walked into Grabit and Son's little dusty back office, and there sat Magus behind his desk, with his own peculiar, wheedling smile shimmering over his

rather good-looking countenance. There sat Magus eating a kidney pudding, and studying a volume of skeletons.

“‘Hey, my good friend,’ he exclaimed, as he rose, put down his pudding, and shook me by both hands. ‘I’m downright glad to see you. Hum! do you know, I have been thinking about you all the morning; and I was groaning about you last night, for I know you are sorely tried just now, &c., &c. But what ails you now, brother? What fresh trial have you had since we last met? Sit down and unbosom yourself to me,—hum.’

“So I sat down, after Magus had dusted a chair for me with his pudding bag, and I then unburdened my mind freely to him; and he sat the while nodding, and smiling, and winking, like a crow watching a dying bullock. That morning, in addition to many other sources of anxiety, I had been disappointed in the receipt of a sum of money from a debtor in the country; and I was deficient, by a few hundreds of pounds, of a sum which I wished to make up by the following day.

“‘Whew!’ whistled Magus, after I had briefly told him my tale. ‘Is that all that is troubling you? hum! Cheer up, my brother; I’ll very soon help you over that difficulty. Put on a smiling face, and nobody in the city will suspect you of being ‘hard up.’ Try a little bit of this kidney pudding, it’s nice and savoury. Ah, you are better already, I declare; you are smiling now; that’s a cheering change; for you were looking like a sack of sour flour when you first came in. Now then to business, I’ll soon put you in funds.’ As he said this, he unlocked his cashbox.

“‘You are too kind, Mr. Grabit,’ I replied. ‘I really did not tell you my difficulties in the hope of pecuniary aid from you; I did not expect it. I can manage very well: my bankers will readily’——

“‘Don’t say another word,’ said Magus. ‘If there is one man in the colony that I respect more than another, it is yourself: I have said that to Mrs. Grabit forty times, at least. And shall I not strain a point to help you, when I am sure you would run to do as much for me? Pshaw! too kind, indeed! it’s my duty, and nothing more,—hum! Here, look at this little bit of paper; Sharr, Cook, and Co.’s bill at four months, for £334. 2s. 3d.: take that, put your name on the back of it, slip it into the discount pot, and I’ll warrant it will melt like beeswax. You can give me your bill for the same amount; but stay, that won’t do, neither, that’s too transparent; you

had better give me two bills at three and four months for £256. 11s. 9d. each, and I can give you Grabit and Son's bill for the balance. Those Bank directors are as sharp as barbers' razors, but old Magus is a match for them any day. If they trace that transaction, you may sew me up in a bag of weevils. Hum.'

"'But is that all fair, Mr. Grabit?' I asked, hesitatingly. 'I am almost a novice in bill transactions; and I wish I knew less about them than I do.'

"'Fair!' exclaimed Magus, as he replaced the volume of skeletons on a dusty shelf behind his chair. 'Would Magus Grabit do an unfair thing, think you? Hum! Why, it's a respectable mode of 'raising the wind' which is practised every day. I have done it often; and I'm sure my conscience is as clear as a hogshead of gin.'.....

"To make a long, sad story very short, Mr. Toddle," continued my friend, "I had to pay Sharr, Cook, and Co., and Grabit and Son's bills at maturity, as well as my own. But that was a mere trifle; only the beginning of the pecuniary scarifying which I received in that second magic circle that I had been fool enough to enter; and where for many weary, anxious months I was as fast bound as a blue-bottle in a spider's web. The first conjurer, and his invisible mate Gilbert, had wantonly besmattered me with soot, which, however, soon washed off, and left no material traces; but the second conjurer, and his goblins, said, 'Presto, fly,' to all my coin, and bedaubed my conscience too with the indelible soot of self-reproach, for demeaning myself by blowing into their tin pots, or associating myself in any way with such unscrupulous characters; and before I could get away from their humiliating influence, I was as miserable as an old cock plucked of all his feathers and his comb too; and as powerless to 'raise the wind' (even if I were so disposed) as a pair of rat-eaten bellows, or a barrel organ without a handle.

"If a bustling man were suddenly to tumble down in a dirty thoroughfare, nine out of ten of the casual passers-by would probably laugh at him. At all events, he would be disappointed if he expected *much* sympathy. I know, too, that I should be simple if I looked for much condolence in my mishaps which I have just narrated," continued my friend Gudgeon. "I seldom think of them, and I have not alluded to them now, Mr. Toddle, in the hope of enlisting your sympathy for myself, but in order to induce you to raise your warning

voice against an evil which many an honest young trader has been insidiously lured into; and you may stand me up for a beacon, if you choose.

“‘Raising the wind,’ or, in other words, discounting accommodation bills, is not a fair and legitimate mode of raising money; but it is a ‘temptation and a snare.’ That is the least I can say about it. It has led many an honest, industrious man into the bankruptcy court, and associated his name with disreputable men. It is a bait which designing persons often use to entrap the unwary; and young traders, especially, should beware of those who propose to them what may seem an easy expedient to tide over temporary pecuniary difficulties; for it often proves to be the entrance to a labyrinth of trouble and anxiety, from which they never extricate themselves. And let them not suppose that the managers and directors of banks remain long ignorant of such fictitious transactions. They may, perhaps, be deceived for a short time by such expert manipulators as Magus Grabit; but detection is eventually certain, and then the credit of the trader having recourse to such expedients must suffer in the estimation of those gentlemen, whose good opinion it is assuredly his interest to cultivate. A just, straightforward system of dealing is the only safe one; and though honest efforts should fail,—as they sometimes do,—there is the comfort of a good conscience, and the possession of a good name, to support a man under his reverses; but, far above that, the just man has a strengthening assurance in that precious promise of Almighty God, that ‘no good thing will He withhold from them that walk uprightly.’”

CHAPTER XL.

BEREAVED Parents. Tom Plodd and his Wife Ellen. Poor Charlie. A short Sketch from Mr. Dovecott's Experience. Unostentatious Charity. Goliath Trump and the Lascar Sailor with a blistered Back.

ONE afternoon Mr. Toddle proposed to show Christopher some of the beauties of the river above Frog's Flat, which proposition he joyfully acceded to.

As they walked towards the jetty, to embark in the yacht, Mr. Toddle called at a shop, and bought some lollipops and a little toy horse, remarking, as he did so, that they were for one of his pretty pets up the river.

Away they went, before a gentle breeze, and in a short time they landed at a farm on the river bank, and entered a neat flower garden, at the end of which was the homestead—a rough slab-built hut, covered with tea-tree bark; but all the cracks in the walls were stopped up with mud and straw, and it was nicely whitewashed inside and out, and looked very snug and comfortable. It was shaded by a white cedar, and a cluster of castor-oil trees; while in the rear were peach and other fruit trees in abundance.

Mr. Toddle expressed surprise that his funny little favourite, Charley, did not run out to greet him with a kiss of welcome; for his bright eyes generally sighted Mr. Toddle's boat afar off, and his merry voice was usually heard by his old friend long before he reached the jetty at Sorghum Farm. They entered the cottage, which, though humble, was scrupulously clean, and evidenced the tidiness of the housewife. Numerous hams and flitches of bacon were hanging overhead, showing signs of the good management and the easy circumstances of the inmates. Scarcely anything removes the suspicion of poverty sooner than a few sides of fat bacon hanging from the ridge pole of a humble cot; or a reserve of mutton hams garnishing the sides of a spacious bush chimney.

“Charley! Charley! Where are you, Master Slyboots? Are you hiding under the sofa, or in the cupboard? I'll tickle you,

when I catch you. I'll pull your curly wig for you, for not coming out to meet me. Come here, my pet, and see what a fine horsey I have for you, with a tail like daddy's shaving brush, and such a lot of lollies too."

Mr. Toddle looked around, as he thus addressed the absent one, in fond expectation of seeing his pretty little playfellow rush from some hiding-place into his arms, his hazel eyes sparkling the while with fun, and with joy too, at the sight of his smart horsey.

"Where have you flown too, Charley, boy? Where are you hiding your little sunny face? And where's mammy? Come hither, you rogey-pogey, or I'll eat all the lollipops, and cut your horse's tail off. Roo-it too tooey! Roo-it too tooey! Charley, Charley, boy!" continued Mr. Toddle, playfully imitating Punch's peculiar nasal idiom.

Presently the door of her inner room opened, and a young woman issued from it, clad in deep mourning. She saluted Mr. Toddle respectfully, but did not speak a word. Her face was pale, and her eyes were swollen with recent grief. She sank down in a chair, buried her face in her apron, and sobbed hysterically.

Mr. Toddle gazed on her with silent sympathy for a few minutes; then, motioning Christopher to accompany him, left the house, and walked through the cultivation, towards a man who was hilling corn a short distance off. When the man caught sight of the visitors, he dropped his hoe, and walked towards them, with sorrow on his countenance.

"Good evening, Tom! How are you? Pray tell me what is the matter with poor Ellen, and where is my boy Charley?" said Mr. Toddle, in a commiserating tone.

The man struggled hard to master his emotion, but in vain. His voice faltered, and he barely articulated the words, "Poor Charley's dead!" then burst into a fit of grief, which seemed to convulse every muscle of his athletic frame.

"Poor boy! poor boy!" softly ejaculated Mr. Toddle, while starting tears attested the reality of his condolence with his humble friend's loss. After walking a little distance in silence, Mr. Toddle stopped, and laying his hand on the man's shoulder, said kindly, "Tell me, Tom, before we go into the house, how and when this sad event happened. Come into the barn, and tell me all about it."

They accordingly entered the barn, and sat down on some straw, when Tom, in husky accents, told his sorrowful story, which I give in substance, not in his own incoherent words.

It appeared that one morning, about a fortnight before, Charley was allowed to amuse himself, as usual, in the garden; and his mother, being busy making her yearly stock of peach jam, had omitted to look after him so closely as she generally did. She had once or twice called him to taste her jam, but his non-appearance did not disturb her, as she thought he was with his father, who was mowing lucerne in an adjoining paddock; for Charley dearly loved to tumble about in the new-mown hay. At dinner-time she blew the bullock's horn, as a signal for her husband; but when she saw him coming home without the boy on his shoulder, she naturally became alarmed, and made loud inquiries for the missing one, when her husband—equally concerned—told her that he had not seen the boy since breakfast time.

The sad story is soon told. A search was made, and poor Charley was found lying at the bottom of the river, in front of the jetty. In his hand was a piece of cotton, with a crooked pin attached to it—the poor little fellow's fishing-line. His plump, well formed limbs were cold and rigid, and his pretty curly locks were covered with ooze and sea-weed. His mother pressed his dripping form to her bosom, and kissed his clammy lips with frantic eagerness; but her love, warm as it was, could not rekindle the spark of life. Her precious darling, Charley,—her late merry chattering companion,—her only child, was dead.

Tom Plodd and his wife Ellen were an honest, industrious pair, and as simple and loving as two children. They had been in Mr. Toddle's service at one time; and he respected them for their unostentatious virtue and faithfulness. He was very fond of Charley, too, who was a romping prattling little rogue about four years old, with a ruddy, laughing face, and eyes bright as jewels,—his father's pet, and his mother's joy.

The news of his untimely death was a sudden shock to Mr. Toddle; and he sat on the sofa for some time after he re-entered the house,—abstractedly handling the toy horse which he had bought for Charley, while tears fell from his eyes. Presently he seemed to arouse from his gloomy reverie. Rising and stepping over to the weeping parents, he took a hand of each of them, and gently whispered, “‘Look upwards, friends! Your child ‘is not dead, but sleepeth!’ Listen a little, while I tell you the experience of a dear old friend of mine; and perhaps it may ease your sorrowing hearts, by diverting your thoughts to the only

source of comfort in affliction, and help you to believe that there is mercy mingled even with this painful dispensation." He then re-seated himself, and softly spoke as follows :—

My friend, Mr. David Dovecott, thus related his trials to me, as I sat beside him and his devoted wife one summer evening :—
“About twelve months after our marriage, Mr. Toddle, my dear wife presented me with a darling boy, which seemed to open a fresh avenue in my heart for love to enter. I know you are fond of little boys and girls, Sir ; for I have seen you hopping about like a kangaroo with a lot of children after you, screaming with fun ; so you will understand how I loved my precious boy, who, as he grew up, and began to toddle about, seemed to fill the house with rare music, and my heart with a new joy. How deeply Nanny and I prized him ! Too much, I fear, for we almost idolized him. By his thousand winning ways and funny pranks, he wound himself round our hearts so tightly, that other and higher love was almost excluded ; and I believe that is why God saw it would be a mercy to take our idol from us, and to ruffle our too even course of happiness a little.

“Sickness prostrated our darling boy ; and day after day, and night after night, we watched him with that anxious interest which none but fond parents know. Gradually he sank under the wasting influence of fever, which no human skill could allay. His round rosy cheeks became pale and sunken, his plump little limbs were wasted and shrivelled. The merry laughter, which had sounded like the music of spring birds in our home, gave place to a low, piteous whine ; and the smiles on his pretty dimpled face were changed to the sharp wince of suffering, which racked our hearts to witness. Our house was silent as a sepulchre ; for all the servants were fond of little Willie ; and sadness beclouded each face as the doctor went away day after day, without saying a word to encourage a ray of hope of the recovery of our loved one. I need not tell you, Mr. Toddle, that I often prayed to God to spare my boy, and my dear wife prayed too. But I did not ask *unreservedly* for the life of my child : to my earnest pleadings for him I always added the proviso, ‘Lord, Thou knowest what is best—help me to be submissive to Thy will.’ Still, I felt it very hard to say, ‘Take my boy, Lord, if Thou seest it best to do so.’ O, how difficult it is to see wisdom and mercy in such a dispensation, while our spirits are crushed down by the afflictive stroke !

“One afternoon, Sir, there was an apparent improvement in

our darling : his eyes looked brighter, and there was a slight colour in his cheeks, and he smiled while he faintly lisped our names. How carefully Nanny and I watched him that night ; and how we cheered each other with the promise of his recovery ! How we admired his sleeping form, with the curly locks clustering about his noble brow ! How we sat, and drew bright pictures of our future happiness in training him up to manhood. But all those hopes were suddenly blighted, and the pride of our eyes faded before us like the fleeting tints of a rainbow. About midnight, an unmistakeable change stole over our beloved child's features ; and while we stood beside his cot, gazing on him with streaming eyes, his gentle spirit soared away home. O, Sir ! what a crushing blow that was to us ! But you have experienced a similar loss, so you understand it. May God comfort all those who are now mourning, as my poor wife and I mourned on that memorable night.

“The loss of that dear child was an intense grief to us for several months. But time softens down our heaviest sorrows ; and we tried our best to bear our trial with resignation, and to stay our minds on the Divine assurance, ‘that all things work together for good to them that love God.’ Dear Nanny gathered up all Willie’s clothes, and toys, and everything that had belonged to him, and locked them in a separate drawer of her wardrobe. Nothing that could recall the memory of the dear little fellow could be seen, and we rarely ventured to speak of him for several weeks. It is marvellous, though, how small a thing will suddenly re-open the springs of sorrow, when we thought they were almost dried up, as the following little incident will show. One evening, I was searching in my study for a document which I had mislaid ; and in turning over a waste-paper basket, there I found a little toy-kitten, Willie’s ‘pretty little pussy,’ as he used to call it, and which I remembered seeing him put to bed in my paper basket on the very evening he was taken ill. The sight of that simple toy proved to me that I had not forgotten my darling boy, and that my tears would flow, in spite of my reason. In fact, Sir, I have not forgotten him to this day, nor shall I ever do so while memory holds her seat. But my sorrow is turned into joy and gratitude ; for I cannot have the shade of a doubt that he is safe in heaven, and perhaps very soon I shall re-unite with him, for the sand in my life’s glass has not long to run. Yes, he is safe, I know. Thank God for it ! But had he been spared to me, when I so ardently longed to keep him, how can I tell what sad

fate might have befallen him? It is awfully possible that I might now be weeping in bitterness over his poor wrecked soul.

"Ah, Mr. Toddle, depend upon it, it is all right when God takes our children from us in early life, painful though it be for us to part with them. It is all right, Sir, and more a matter for thanksgiving than for sorrowful repining, which many parents have owned, after the keen edge of their grief has been worn down, and they are able to see through the cloud that overshadowed their spirits. To have an infant in heaven is an honour and a privilege which cannot be over-estimated; and I assure you, Sir, I would not now call my Willie back to earth,—if I were permitted to do so,—even if he were heir to the throne of England.

"About two years after Willie's death, we were blessed with another bright-eyed boy to fill his place; and our hearts again rejoiced. But I must allude very briefly to this subject, for reasons which you will shortly understand. At four years old, little David was seized with a dangerous epidemic, which had carried off many children in Sydney, and for which, I believe, the imperfect sewerage of the city is blameable. I was almost frantic at the idea of losing my boy; and I never before felt so much opposed to the Almighty's dispensations. I prayed to God, unconditionally, to spare my child; to save myself and wife the bitter sorrow of losing him, as we had lost our first-born.—He was spared, Sir," continued Mr. Dovecott, with increasing emotion. "He grew up to manhood; and O! what intense grief he has caused us! But I will forbear 'to draw his frailties from their dread abode.' He is dead! He died an awful death! O God! O God! would that I had buried him in infancy! My poor boy! my poor ruined boy!"

My friend Mr. Dovecott here became so overwhelmed by the bitter recollections of the untimely death of his son, (who, I afterwards learned, had committed suicide,) that he could not utter another word, and he wept with the agony of despair. I could not say much to him; so, after a few words of condolence, I bade him good night, and retired to my chamber, pondering over the mysterious doings of Providence, as displayed in the recital of my sorrowing friend.

The evening shadows were deepening, when Mr. Toddle and Christopher arose to depart from the gloomy dwelling of poor Tom Plodd and his sobbing wife. Expressions of gratitude from the bereaved pair were checked by strong emotion; but

their faces plainly showed that their hearts had been somewhat lightened of their heavy load of grief, and that hope was reviving in their saddened souls. They had silently looked to Him who alone is able to comfort the distressed; and they were enabled to withdraw their thoughts from their desolated hearth, to the *home* where their angel boy was basking in glory "brighter than brightness.".....

The friends had sat for some time in silence, as the boat slowly glided down the river. At length Christopher stretched himself, and remarked, with a sigh, "I feel for those poor things, Mr. Toddle; and if I could help them in any way, I would do it."

"It is very kind of you, certainly," said Mr. Toddle. "I can tell you how you may help them materially; and I do not scruple to do so, as I know you can afford it. I am acquainted with their circumstances and their dispositions, too. They would make any shift rather than reveal their necessities to any one, even to me; but I happen to know that, at the present time, they are very short of ready money. They have not been long on their farm, and have had many things to buy with their savings; so the expenses of their poor boy's funeral will come hard upon them. If you send them a little money, it will be a real help to them, I am sure. Tom would never ask such a favour from you; but I have no delicacy in asking for him, and will thank you for him, too."

"Well, I should like to send him a trifle," said Christopher: "how shall I do it?"

"The most delicate way of doing it would be to put a bank note in an envelope, properly addressed; and merely write inside it, 'A gift from the Divine owner of the silver and gold.' By that plan you will save Tom and his wife the embarrassment of thanking you; and save them, too, from feeling an overwhelming obligation to you. Of course, they will thank God for it, and that exercise will do their hearts good.

"I recollect once meeting a very worthy man (who is always going about doing good) under the portico of the Sydney Post-office. He had a letter in his hand; and, as I saluted him, he showed me the half of a bank note for £10, and, at the same time, asked me if I had sent it to him. The letter intimated that if he would acknowledge the receipt of that remittance through the daily press, the other half of the note would be sent to him in due course."

"I like to hear that, Mr. Toddle," said Christopher, with a smile which showed his innate kindness of heart. "But did you ever find out who sent the £10 note, Sir?"

"Yes, I did; though without unduly prying into the matter. A short time afterwards, I was having a comfortable chat with a much esteemed friend, who takes a quiet part in many of the philanthropic movements in the land; and I casually mentioned that incident, when I saw, by the peculiar twist of his head, and his laughing through his nose, that he knew something about the ten-pound note. After a while he told me, in confidence, who was the sender of it; and, at the same time, he told me many other noble acts of 'doing good by stealth,' which the same charitable hand had done. Though I have subsequently heard of numberless acts of munificence which that same wealthy gentleman has performed throughout the colony,—especially in the cause of education,—not one of his good deeds has pleased me more than the comparatively trifling act of sending that £10 note to the poor, but excellent, man before alluded to; who, perhaps, to this day, is ignorant of the medium of that gift from God. I wish that sort of charity was more frequently exercised, Mr. Cockle. It is a practical exposition of the Divine injunction, 'Let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth.'"

"That is something like the way my father has helped lots of poor old people in London," remarked Christopher.

"You have, perhaps, heard the story of the good old Quaker," continued Mr. Toddle, "who saw a group of persons expressing their feeling for a poor man who had slipped down, and smashed all his stock-in-trade of crockery-ware, and broken his leg, too. 'How *much* dost thou feel for him, friends?' asked the Quaker, putting his hand into his pocket, and producing a sovereign. 'I feel twenty shillings.' The practical appeal was not in vain. A strikingly analogous case came under my notice in Sydney not long ago, which I will relate, if you like."

"Yes, I should like to hear it. I hope it's a funny story, Sir. I like your funny stories."

"If it is not very funny, it is very refreshing; and I will warrant its authenticity. I'll trouble you to take a small pull on the lee jib sheet. Thank you, Sir, that will do; belay."

"I was one night sitting in a chemist's shop in Sydney," continued Mr. Toddle, "chatting with the proprietor, with whom I was intimate. Behind the counter, on the opposite

side of the shop, was a bustling-looking young gentleman,—with blue spectacles on, and his hair *à la Brutus*,—pounding up physic in an iron mortar as energetically as though he really meant to cure somebody. He was a relative of the first-mentioned gentleman, and had but recently arrived in the colony. ‘You look a likely young man to make your way in this land,’ I thought, as I remarked his active movements; but as he was busy, and I had had no previous acquaintance with him, I did not speak to him. I was conversing with my chemical friend on the subject of his last sermon, which had vastly interested me, when suddenly a Lascar sailor rushed into the shop, howling piteously, and trying to explain his ailments in Hindoostanee, which was wholly unintelligible to every one present, except himself. I soon, however, saw that his shirt was burnt, and that his back was a mass of blisters. He had been drinking in a public-house near at hand; and, by some means, set fire to his calico clothing, and had burnt his back in a shocking manner.

“My friend, the senior chemist,—who was as tender as a Christmas turkey,—began to wipe the sympathy from his overflowing eyes; while he exclaimed, in the most commiserating minor key, ‘Poo-o-or fellow! poo-o-or fellow! dear, dear me, what a state his poor back is in! Bless me! however did he do that?’ The young gentleman on the opposite side of the shop looked over his blue spectacles for a moment, then dropped his pestle, and shouted to the sailor in a loud and, I fancied, a gruff voice, ‘Hallo there! what are you kicking up all that row about, eh? Hold your noise, boy! Bother it all, hold your noise. We’ll have the fire-engines here, directly! Crying will never cure your sore back.’

“I felt almost indignant at the want of feeling which I fancied the young man displayed; and was about to express my opinion of his barbarity, when I saw him hastily tear off half a yard of lint, and taking a pot from a shelf behind him, he spread a thick layer of salve on the lint, then walking round the counter, he said to the man, in the same brusque tones, ‘Barn it all; shut your mouth, and hold up your shirt.’ He then clapped the plaister on the poor fellow’s back, and exclaimed, ‘There now; be off home, and go to bed.’

“The sailor turned round, with his hands clasped in the attitude of thanksgiving; and muttered, ‘O massa, massa! good! berry good!’ Then taking half-a-crown from his pocket, he offered it in payment.

“ ‘Be off! be off! Don’t be kicking up a row here. Put your money into your pocket,’ said the young man, with a smile. He then walked behind the counter again, and resumed his job at the pestle and mortar, while the poor black sailor pocketed his money, and left the shop evoking blessings—in his unknown tongue—on the head of the generous man who had so summarily relieved his intense pain.

“From that moment I loved that bluff young gentleman with the blue spectacles,” added Mr. Toddle; “and I very soon discovered that his roughness was merely external, like the shell of a cocoa-nut; and that he possessed a more than ordinary share of the ‘milk of human kindness.’ My subsequent knowledge of him has confirmed that opinion; and I heartily wish every poor fellow with a sore back or an empty pocket knew where to find a person who would as promptly relieve his necessities as my friend Goliath Trump would do it. And if he did not cry, or utter many soft words of pity, he would *act*; which, at any rate, is more substantial benefit. It would be better to pull a poor wretch out of a miry ditch than to stand wondering how he got into it, and shedding tears over his misery.

“Pray don’t mistake me, Mr. Cockle, I do not undervalue soft words, nor do I much admire rough words in general; and had the senior chemist displayed as much practical sympathy as the other one, I should have liked his manner best. Perhaps he was going to spread a plaister after he had finished pitying the poor sailor. It is very likely; for Solomon Trump is a nice man, as full of charity as a church poor-box; and, beside his bluff relative, he looks as smooth as preserved ginger contrasted with pickled walnuts.”

CHAPTER XLI.

CONTAINS something about Sailors and "Sea Yarns." The comical Story of Tom Pintle and his Monkey. Jack's poor old Mother cold and hungry. Sundry Suggestions to "those who go down to the Sea in Ships."

"FROM the many stories I have heard you tell of sea life, I judge you have had some experience with sailors, Mr. Toddle," said Christopher, as he sat in that gentleman's sanctum after tea, the following evening.

"A very reasonable conclusion, Sir; especially as you have sailed fifteen thousand miles with me," said Mr. Toddle, smiling at his simple young guest, who was nursing one foot in that ungraceful fashion peculiar to "gents" and savages. "I have travelled a good deal by sea, and have been tolerably observant of passing incidents; in short, I usually try, as well as I can, to follow the example of Locke, who said he attributed what little he knew to the not having been ashamed to ask for information; and to the rule he had laid down of conversing with all descriptions of men on those topics chiefly that formed their own particular profession and pursuit. Besides, I have owned vessels for many years, so have had a direct interest in studying nautical matters a little. Moreover, as I have told you before, I am fond of sailors, and feel a strong desire to see their condition, as a class, improved; and to that end I have pretty closely studied their peculiarities."

"They are a rough lot of fellows in general," remarked Christopher, carelessly.

"Ay, that is the opinion which many persons express, who really know or care very little about sailors; or who take but a prejudiced, one-sided view of their characteristics," replied Mr. Toddle. "Persons who have such ungenerous feelings are seldom active in trying to reform those 'rough fellows.'"

"What a horrible coarse-looking man that is!" said a lady to me one day, as a sailor brushed past her on the quarter deck of a ship, in which I was a passenger.

"He is not a very good-looking man, certainly, Madam," I

replied ; ‘ but he is a smart sailor for all that. He is one of the volunteers who went aloft, and cut the tattered sails off the yards when we were in danger of being dismasted in the ‘ Pampero,’ on the Brazilian coast. And during the heavy weather we had off Cape Horn, I remarked that man’s daring conduct on several occasions. I remember one night, especially, when I had almost despaired of seeing daylight again. I went on deck in the middle watch, and shall never forget the terrific scene. The elements seemed to have combined to overpower our struggling ship ; and my heart quailed within me at the prospect of death, and at the terror which I *then* felt of the awful judgment that would follow. The decks were white with snow, and the wind roared through the rigging like thunder. The ship was scudding under bare poles, before a dangerously heavy sea, and was at times almost buried by the waves which dashed over her, and saturated her shivering crew. That man, Madam, and another ‘ rough fellow,’ were at the helm, exposed to the fury of the storm, and on their hardihood and skill the lives of all on board depended. Had they, through unwatchfulness, or lack of nerve, allowed the ship to broach to, in that heavy sea, it is awfully probable she would have gone, with her living freight, and her boxes of gold, to the rocky gulf below. As I went shivering to my snug little cabin, on that memorable night, I could not but feel how much I was indebted to the sturdy bravery of those two men at the helm.’

“ The lady in question had not thought of all that,” continued Mr. Toddle ; “ and it is probable she did not afterwards shrink at the bare sight of the man, or consider him so ‘ horribly coarse.’ Many persons think sailors are handy sort of animals in bad weather ; creatures who have no nerves, and who don’t value their lives higher than a bottle of rum and a fiddle. Other persons perhaps think sailors are the class of mortals from whom Monboddo deduced his whimsical notion that men ‘ are monkeys with their tails rubbed off ;’ and the way they cling to the slippery yards in a gale of wind favours the conclusion. But I am sorry to think that comparatively few folks in the world believe that sailors have souls, as well as bodies, with fellow-feelings,—or few act as if they thought so.

“ I could give a host of examples of noble conduct in times of danger, which I have personally observed in sailors ; and I could cite instances of genuine good nature and unpolished honesty, rarely to be seen in dandies, or bipeds of that species. Still I admit that, as a class, sailors are careless, rollicking.

fellows; and some 'Jack tars' are really Tartars. I have seen plenty of their capers, both on sea and on shore; and have had my patience sorely tried, and my pocket touched, by them sometimes. I have often pitied the battered constables of Sydney, when a gang of sailors have taken possession of the city for a time: and I have sympathized with a dreary skipper, whose crew had run away to the diggings, and left him *solus*. I have been victimized to some extent by runaway sailors too.

"You see, by these admissions, that I am not blind to their follies and failings, Mr. Cockle. I do not wish to obtain more consideration for them than they deserve: but a grateful remembrance of many perils I have escaped through their manly hardihood makes a powerful appeal to my merciful judgment of even their worst qualities."

"They are such spiteful fellows," drawled Christopher. "I don't know if you remember how they served me the night before we crossed the line, Sir. I saw a light at the bows of the 'Calabash,' and I heard a great noise, and some one hail us; so I thought a vessel was close by; and away I ran towards the forecastle; but when I got there I had a bucket of salt-water emptied on my head by some rude sailor up in the rigging; and when I told the Captain, he"—

"Ha, ha, ha!" laughed Mr. Toddle, "that was only fun, and part of an ordeal which few passengers were exempt from in former years. I have still a vivid recollection of the barbarous usage I suffered, when I first crossed the equator. My face was begrimed with an ill-smelling compound, laid on with a brush made of hedgehogs' quills,—I think,—and then scraped off with an iron hoop. Afterwards I was turned heels over head into a large tank of salt water; and a sailor, dressed like a bear, mauled me about, and growled in my ears, till I was nearly scared out of my wits.

"I have on several other occasions been the subject of their nautical jokes, but I always took them good-humouredly; for instance, I was tied up in the mizen rigging on my first essay at going aloft, and had to purchase my freedom. On another occasion I was summoned from my cabin early one morning to see a water-spout, and when I hastened on deck I was saturated with sea water from the spout of the fire engine. At the same time I was reminded by a waggish young midshipman that it was the *first of April*. I recollect, too, the first day I was at sea, innocently asking an old tar if the ship sailed all night: when he replied, with a grave look, 'We keep sail on her on

moonlight nights, Sir; but on dark nights we tie her up to a tree till daylight.' I have listened to sailors' yarns by the fathom, as they call it,—and whimsical enough some of them were."

"O, I should very much like to hear a few of them now, Mr. Toddle," interrupted Christopher, looking as pleasingly excited as a child at a jack-in-the-box.

"Well, I will give you one, as a specimen of Jack's love for the comical and marvellous combined," said Mr. Toddle, smiling; and then he began the following "sailors' yarn."

TOM PINTLE AND HIS MONKEY.

"Would you like to hear my yarn about the monkey that I was trying to teach English, Sir?" asked Tom Pintle, as he sat on the spars one moonlight night, smoking his pipe.

"Yes, I should, Tom," said I. "It is something new to hear a monkey speaking English."

"Not at all, Sir: you may hear that any day you like in certain society; but that's nothing to do with my yarn. We were going home from Valparaiso in the 'Nancy Dawson,' and a precious rough passage we had round the Horn. It was winter time; almost cold enough to freeze the nose off the figure-head, and our ship was as wet as a diving-bell,—though that's neither here nor there. Well, Sir, I had bought a fine Jack monkey from a Spaniard at Mendoza for three dollars, and was taking him home as a present to a rich old aunt, who was fond of pet animals. His master warranted him to do any blessed thing but talk English; and he said the monkey had sworn to him that he never could do that, for it was ten times harder jaw work than cracking Brazil nuts.

"O, if that's all that's the matter with him," says I, 'he'll soon get over it, I'll engage. He'll hear plenty of plain English on board our ship, for the skipper is a tiger to swear; besides the crew all hail from the Cove of Cork, and everybody says that Irishmen speak the best English in the world.' So I collared Jocko, and carried him on board, and rigged him a sort of hurricane house alongside of the galley. When we got into cold weather, I made him a nice warm monkey jacket out of an old blanket; for he was shivering and shaking like a dog at a hot sausage. In fact, Sir, I did my best to make him comfortable and happy, and treated him like a messmate.

"But he was such an awful thief, Sir, that the cook couldn't leave his galley a minute without losing something or other good

to eat. It was wonderful to me where Jocko stowed away all the things he stole, for I never could find any of them ; but the cook swore he would scald him to death, if I did not shift him away from the caboose. I reasoned with the cook, (that is, I pitched into him twice for hitting Jocko on the head with an iron tormentor,) but that did not help the monkey much. Last of all, they came it too strong upon the poor brute ; and I found out the wicked plots to ruin his character. One day he was being abused dreadfully for eating a red-hot plum pudding, and a cherry pie,—dish and all : so I began to see through the thing, as the saying is.

“Fair play for every man, if he’s only a monkey,” says I ; and Jocko looked up at me, and winked, and said, ‘Hear, hear,’ in Spanish. ‘I don’t call it fair play,’ says I, ‘to thrash a monkey for the thievish tricks of them chaps forward ;’ for it was some of the sailors as had stolen the Captain’s pudding and cherry pie, and, coward like, said the monkey did it. So I moved Jocko’s crib under the top-gallant forecastle ; but there was a nipping draught through the hawse holes, enough to cut his buttons off ; and he didn’t like the change a bit ; for every time I went to see him he jabbered a lot of foreign lingo, and looked as sulky as a young dunce.

“What are you jawing about ?” I says to him, one day. ‘Can’t you see I don’t understand a word of your gab ? Why don’t you speak English ?’

“With that he paid out a lot of Spanish or some other outlandish gibberish, swearing, of course. So I says to him, in a quiet, fatherly tone, ‘I tell you what it is, Mister Don Jock, if you pay out much more of that sort of slang, you and I will have a row ; so I give you notice. I bought you honestly, gave three pillar-dollars for you ; and I begin to think it’s a precious sight more than you are worth. Ain’t you my property ? What do you mean by your impudence ? as the planter said to his nigger when he sneezed. I believe your old master told me a lie when he said you were such a mighty clever fellow ; for you ought to be a scholar by this time, considering the society you have had on board. Why don’t you speak English ?’ said I.

“With that he jabbered away again, and looked real savage at me.

“Do you call that English ? Dash your impudence, what do you mean by that sort of gabble ? It may pass well enough in some circles,” says I, ‘but it won’t do on board the *Nancy Dawson*, I can tell you. I’ll give you a lesson, my boy,’ said I,

catching him by the scruff of the neck, and sousing him into a wash-deck tub full of salt water, without giving him time to take his jacket off. 'There, if you don't like that, I'll give you another. Now speak English, will you? you ugly, skulking, nut-cracking ignoramus,' I roared; for I was naturally getting riled at his obstinacy.

"He hopped out of the water as nimbly as if it were boiling hot, instead of freezing cold; and, my blocks, Sir! if he didn't sling his slang at me like red-hot shot, and tried to bite me, too. So I got regular savage; for it isn't pleasant for a man to be overhauled by a monkey, you know, Sir. I coted him by the tail, and soused him into the tub again; and held him under water till he was half drowned. Then I pulled him out, and gave him a kick on the stern, which sent him scudding under the windlass. 'Now speak English, you beggar!' says I.

"'Thunder and grindstones!' roared the monkey, with a voice like a Spanish bull. 'Can any mortal man stand this? Dash my buttons! let me catch you, I'll smash your head into a custard apple.'

"Blue murder! how that made me jump, Sir! I turned round, and bolted out of the fore-castle with my hair as stiff as a dry swab; but as I was passing the galley, I run foul of the cook, who was going aft with a tureen of hot pea-soup in his hand. Down we both went sprawling on the deck; and the soup went all over my back; and a pretty mess I was in; for hot pea-soup is nasty stuff on your back, Sir, whatever they may say about the right use of it.

"I was carried to my hammock yelling like a scalded pig; and there I lay for three weeks. Awfully bad I was, I can tell you, Sir; and dreadfully scared, too. I wished forty times I had never seen the monkey. When I got off the sick list, I was real shy of Don Jocko; for I thought he was a young devil, of course. I never went within ten fathoms of him, nor spoke a word to him, good or bad. I was frightened of him; and no wonder neither, Sir."

"That is the way of the world, or of some of the men in the world, Tom," I said, smiling. "So long as the poor monkey was patient, you abused him without mercy; but as soon as he spoke up like a man, you ran away like a cur. That is just the way with bullies, as I have often observed. But go on with your yarn, Tom."

"Well, Sir, the sailmaker and Jocko were like brothers; so I sold him to Fidd for a pound of tobacco, and was glad to be

rid of him. When we got to Liverpool, after we had made all square aloft, old Fidd went ashore with Jocko on his back; and sure enough he sold him for five pounds before he had carried him a cable's length. Fidd got drunk with the money, of course; and when he came on board at night, he let out the whole secret, and I found that I had been regularly swindled out of my monkey, and this was how it was done, Sir. When Fidd heard me and the monkey quarrelling, he—like a wicked old sneak—slipped out of his berth, and crawled under the windlass,—in fact, it was that rascally old sailmaker who had roared out, and scared the wits out of me; and I thought it was the monkey all the while.

“What do you think of that for a piece of downright roguery, Sir?” asked Tom, with an appealing look of injured innocence. “But the most wonderful part about it is this,” he continued, “and it gets over me to account for it, unless it be the effect of the awful funk I was in. I am told—of course I can't see it myself—but my shipmates have all declared that there is a big scar on my back, which the pea-soup made; and it's the exact size and shape of a roaring ring-tailed monkey, with a great lump of thunder in one fist, and a grindstone in the other.”

Christopher laughed at the story till he made himself cough; then he declared that it was “a first-rate yarn,” and begged Mr. Toddle to tell him another.

“One of that sort is quite enough for a sample; and I would rather not tell any more,” said Mr. Toddle. “I hope, as sailors are getting more enlightened, their tastes will lead them to spin yarns of a different character to that, which is, however, harmless, compared with some I have heard.”

“During the last quarter of a century, the moral and social condition of seamen has been much improved. In general, their treatment on shipboard is better than in former years. Flogging is rarely heard of, and damaged rations are only to be seen on board ships which are owned and commanded by selfish men, who have not been convinced that it is their best policy to treat their men honestly. Many owners have a real fatherly concern for the comfort of their men's bodies, and the culture of their minds, too. In some large ships there are useful libraries, and other means for mental improvement. I have heard of a whole ship's crew learning navigation in their spare hours on board; and at the end of their voyage 'every man Jack of them' was fit to fill an officer's post.

“In these stirring times, too, all the world goes travelling; and many persons of active minds—who do not choose to loll about the decks doing nothing—employ their leisure hours in instructing the seamen; and a vast amount of good will doubtless result from such rational means. For instance, I knew a gentleman who, while on a voyage, used to go into the fore-castle nearly every day, and instruct the sailors in their watch below; and, before the end of the voyage, there was not one of the crew who could not read the Bible; and, better still, some of them clearly showed that they loved to read it and to make it their chart for the voyage of life. That gentleman also took a stock of amusing and instructive books and periodicals on board with him, and used to circulate them (gratuitously) in every port the ship called at. If travellers in general would follow that example, an incalculable amount of good might be effected, at little cost or trouble.

“In many parts of the world there are sailors’ homes now established; so that poor Jack is not compelled to take up his quarters in public-houses or low lodging-houses, where he is in danger of being tempted to squander his hardly-earned wages in ruinous debauchery. It must be cheering to the poor fellows when at sea, to know that some kind friends on shore care for them, and that they have a *home* to go to, and are not like ‘stormy petrels,’ whose only home is on the foaming billows.

“All honour to those worthy men and women, who are trying to improve the condition of seamen. But they would get more help in their noble work, if folks in general only reflected how much they are dependent on sailors for many of the comforts and luxuries of life; and how often, too, they owe their lives, and the preservation of their friends, to the bravery and hardihood of seamen.

“The motto on the Royal Exchange, London,—that great mart of the world’s metropolis,—is, ‘The earth is the Lord’s, and the fulness thereof,’” continued Mr. Toddle, rising from his seat. “Old England! my beloved country, I glory in your greatness: but I rejoice more in the fact that, as a nation, the Almighty God of all the earth is by you acknowledged and honoured. Therein is your safety and defence against your foes. Therein is the hope of your continued prosperity. If I could make my poor weak voice reach the antipodes at this minute, I would say, with solemn earnestness, Ye mighty merchants of London! may God speed you, and help you to

keep in mind the sacred motto under which you trade, and to acknowledge Him in all your ways. Those among you who need the reminder, I would advise to search in the same sacred record, from whence the above text is derived, for directions how to treat the men to whom you are so largely indebted for your greatness. 'Remember poor Jack!' And to those merchants whose feelings are more powerfully affected by their pockets than by Divine injunction or human sentiment, I would say, Remember, that without seamen your ships would be as useless as waggons without wheels, and you yourselves would perhaps soon be as poor as the ticket porters at the Exchange gates. I wish, too, that I could gently remind Christians in England, and all the world over beside, how much the spiritual enlightenment of sailors would tend, instrumentally, to hasten on that happy epoch, when 'the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of God, as the waters cover the sea.'

"Rough fellows, indeed!" continued Mr. Toddle, with earnestness. "I could adduce examples of true manliness in sailors worthy the imitation of the most polished landmen, ay, of princes. I once saw one of those 'rough fellows'—as you call them—at the helm of a steamer, when we were entering a dangerous harbour in a gale of wind. A heavy sea broke over the stern, swept the decks, and canted the ship's head towards a reef of rocks. Although injured by the weight of water which had dashed over him, the man stuck to his post, (while others of the crew and passengers rushed to the rigging for their lives,) and adroitly put the helm hard down, just in time to save the ship from total destruction. And when a gentleman present put a glistening coin into the sailor's hand, and said a few commendatory words, he quietly replied, 'That's nothing, Sir, it was only my duty: no sailor man would run away from the wheel at such a time as that.' I say, Mr. Cockle, the proudest statesman in the world might learn a useful lesson from that man's quiet bravery and modesty.

"The following authentic instance of filial duty is worthy of being recorded in letters of gold. A lad left his parents' roof in Scotland, and went to sea. After several years of hardship and up-hill work, he landed in Sydney, soon after the gold fields were discovered. He was attracted to the diggings, with several of his shipmates, and after working for some months, till all their funds were exhausted, they were about to return to Sydney; but in trying an old deserted hole, with but little hope of favourable results, they found a lump of gold weighing up-

wards of four pounds. They came to Sydney with their prize; and the young man I allude to sent the whole of his share home to his aged parents. It providentially reached them at a season of severe distress, and afforded them most opportune aid. He then went to sea again; and by steady application to his profession (he was a well educated young man) he rapidly rose; and now he is Captain of as smart a ship as I would wish to sail in. And I have such thorough confidence in his honour and integrity, that I would entrust him with gold enough to ballast his ship, if I had it. I believe he still continues to remit, at regular intervals, a moiety of his earnings to his parents at home, who doubtless are proud enough of their dear boy Willie. An additional joy it must be to them, too, to know that by and by they will meet him beyond the roublesome waves of *time*; for their son is a true Christian. With all my heart I say, God bless the generous fellow! May he have a safe passage over life's dangerous sea; and at last enter the port of heaven with a 'flowing sheet,' and there let go his anchor for ever.

"But I fear I am wearying you, Mr. Cockle, with my long, prosy discourse."

"O no; not at all, Sir," said Christopher, yawning. "I like to hear you talk about sailors; but I wish you would give me another of their rum yarns. I think I begin to like Jack tars a little better than I did; though I cannot believe they are all such fine noble fellows as you have pictured."

"I wish they were all noble fellows," said Mr. Toddle; "but you make a mistake if you think I said they were. By the by, as you are not tired, I will tell you a touching little incident which I met with when I was last in England. I fear it indicates the very opposite disposition in a sailor son to that which was displayed by the noble-hearted young man of whom I have just spoken."

"I went one day to visit some poor people in the old city of E——, in company with a gentleman who was warden of one of the churches there. In a back garret of a large, tottering house, in one of the dingy lanes, I saw a feeble old woman, very scantily clad, shivering before a wretchedly small fire, and looking the picture of gaunt misery itself. Upon conversing with her, I learned that she had subsisted for some time on a weekly allowance of two shillings from the parish, and two loaves of bread, and that she paid one shilling a week for rent. The poor old creature told us, with overflowing eyes, that she had a son a sailor, who used to be very good to her, and allowed her to

draw part of his wages while he was at sea; but his pay suddenly ceased, and she was told by the owners that he had run away from the ship at Sydney, and gone to the diggings. 'Since then,' she said, 'she had had a sad time of it, and she felt the cold, last winter, very much; for she could not afford to buy firing, and her clothes were all worn very thin.'

"'But my poor dear boy Jack is dead, I fear,' added the widow, weeping bitterly. 'I am sure, if he were alive, he would not leave his poor old mother to starve. Never, never! Jack was always a good boy to me. He always loved his mother, bless his heart! He would not forget the time when I worked hard to keep him, after his poor father died, and left me in poverty. He would surely help me, now he knows I am too old to work. Yes, yes, he would send me some of his earnings, that he would; and if it were only enough to pay my rent, it would help me to buy a bit of coal to warm me this wet weather. Jack would never be so cruel as to forget his poor old mother; I am certain sure he wouldn't. He is dead, Sir. Poor boy, he is dead, and I shall never see him any more.'

"It was truly heart-rending to witness the old lady's distress, as she sat in a rush-bottomed chair, sobbing, and shivering with cold; so, after giving her some money and a few words of comforting counsel, my friend and I left her, and went to visit other cases of misery among some lace-makers, of which the ladies who wear Honiton lace have very faint conceptions. I did not tell the disconsolate old widow what I thought of her son Jack; but I was not of opinion that he was dead; for I have, alas! met with too many thoughtless sons in my travels, who were revelling in shameful extravagance, while the 'old folks at home' were perhaps suffering the horrors of slow death by semi-starvation and cold.

"There are many Jacks, and Jills, too, in this land, Mr. Cockle, who have fathers and mothers at home in indigent circumstances; and if they do not actually forget their parents, they virtually forget or ignore their claims; though many of those undutiful ones have perhaps had strong qualms of conscience on the subject, and more uneasiness than a little money is worth. It is an axiom which I believe in, 'that if a man does wrong, knowing it to be wrong, he will soon do wrong, believing it to be right.' Possibly, some of those negligent Jacks and Jills have drilled themselves into the selfish belief that their money is their own, and they have a right to keep it, though their parents lack common necessities. That is a mistake, however,

which they will ere long sorrowfully acknowledge, and perhaps, alas ! when too late to remedy it.

" I often wish I could do or say something to arouse those thoughtless ones to their duty. I should be glad if I could whisper in the ear of giddy Biddy, the housemaid, that the price of the feather in her bonnet would buy her half-famished old mother a warm winter's shawl. Or, if I could find the widow's son Jack, and softly say to him, as he was perhaps uncorking a bottle of rum, ' Jack, Jack, for shame ! You are not displaying the manly spirit of a true British tar, that I have so often extolled. How is it you have forgotten your poor old mother, Jack ? Don't you remember you promised that she should never want, so long as you had ' a shot in the locker ? ' ' And while he was perhaps gazing at me with conscience-stricken wonder, I would add, ' The cost of that bottle in your hands is more than her parish allowance for a fortnight. How can you have the heart or conscience to indulge in extravagance, while the dear old creature that gave you birth, and who loves you as dearly as her life, is shivering her way to the grave, lacking the bare necessities of life ? How can you be so cruel, Jack ? ' "

" O Jack ! O Biddy ! " continued Mr. Toddle, with emotion. " If my words could reach you—you to whom this *ad misericordiam* appeal is necessary—I would say, with all the power I could put into my entreaty, ' Don't spend any more money upon things which you can very well dispense with, until you have attended to the absolute wants of those whose claims on you are not less sacred or imperative because many thousand miles of ocean separate you. Pray don't let a grovelling feeling of selfishness cheat you out of the blessings which are specially promised to them who ' honour their father and their mother. ' Send home some of your earnings at once. You can purchase a draft from either of the banks, in town or country, or a Post-office order, without much trouble. Consider how pleased and comforted the dear old folks will be to receive a kind letter from you at Christmas-tide, with something inside it to buy them ' merry Christmas fare. ' You perhaps forget the winter's cold, in this genial climate ; but the north-east winds blow bitterly keen over the frosty fields of old England. Your dear old father's rheumatism will be less painful if he has a good fire to sit by ; and your poor old mother's asthma will be much relieved if she has plenty of warm flannel by day, and a sufficiency of blankets by night. *Send them some money*, like

good boys and girls ; even though you should deny yourselves some little thing that you want. There is an Omniscient Being who sees all you do ; and, depend on it, you will not go unrewarded for any little self-denying act which duty may prompt you to.

“ ‘ Just try for once,’ I would say ; ‘ taste the joy of receiving a loving letter from home, acknowledging the receipt of your remittance ; and I will engage you will not again deny yourselves the exquisite pleasure, for all the feathers or rum bottles in the colony.’ ”

“ But they are not all thoughtless Jacks and Jills in this land, thank God,” added Mr. Toddle, brightening up a little ; “ and I have seen very many instances of praiseworthy consideration on the part of sons and daughters for their necessitous parents, after all. I know three servant girls in Sydney who support their mother at home ; and yet those girls usually dress smarter than servants in general. They never miss what they annually send home. I also know a young man intimately, who was one day induced, in a very remarkable way, to buy a bank-draft to send to his mother, not knowing at the time that she was really in want. The money reached the poor old lady on the very morning when she was about to spend her last shilling.

“ I could give you more examples of the same pleasing kind ; but I see I am sending you to sleep, Mr. Cockle.”

“ O dear no, Sir, I am not asleep,” said Christopher, opening his eyes and mouth with the stupid expression of an over-smoked Chinaman. “ That’s a rum story. And did the cheating sailmaker give Tom Pintle any of the money he got for his monkey, Sir ? ”

“ O, I see my pathetic stories have been lost upon you, Sir,” said Mr. Toddle, laughing. “ Well, never mind. My words have been spoken in sincerity ; and if the theory be true, that words will continue to float on the air till the end of time, who knows but they may softly light upon some kind heart, and produce results which I may hear of in heaven ? Good night, Mr. Cockle.”

“ Good night, Sir. I am sorry I did not hear that last story ; but the fact is, I did not sleep well last night ; for, as I was putting on my night-cap, I saw one of those nasty daddy long-legs spiders on the wall, and I was afraid he would get into the bed, and bite me.”

"It is wonderful how little things sometimes affect great men," said Mr. Toddle. "I have known a philosopher to be kept awake all night by much smaller insects than daddy long-legs creeping into his bed. And I have known a parson six feet high to be harassed all through his sermon by an insignificant little flea biting his back. Good night, Sir."

CHAPTER XLII.

CHRISTOPHER'S Departure from Frogs' Flat. Gale of Wind, with Incidents therein. His unexpected Arrival at Cockatoo Lodge, and the shocking Discovery he made. Meditates drowning himself. Changes his Mind and gets Drunk.

A DETAIL of all Christopher's doings during his sojourn with his good friend, Mr. Toddle, would be too long and too stupid for any reasonable person to read ;—his excited flight home one night, his fancy having run away with his reason, as usual, and distorted the croaking of a large family of frogs in a swamp, to the chuckles of a gang of rattlesnakes pursuing him with ravenous designs ;—and his trepidation on another occasion, when an old black gin, in a natural state, suddenly emerged from the bush, jabbering, "Backa, Massa! Backa, Massa!" which humble application for tobacco he mistook for words of hideous import, and was shocked beyond measure.

Those and a few other specimens of his silliness might be wrought into a chapter comical enough for the columns of "Punch;" but I fancy the reader is almost wearied with the absurd capers of the youth,—whether or not, I am quite tired of recording them. I shall, therefore, get to the end of my story with all practicable expedition.

On the whole, Christopher's visit to Frogs' Flat had been more enjoyable than his visits to other places in the colony. His health had perceptibly improved, and he had begun to discover charms in a quiet life, insomuch that he promised and vowed henceforward to follow Mr. Toddle's advice with respect to regimen and useful occupation. In short, he mentally resolved to turn over a new leaf after his marriage; to eschew prodigality, and diligently to apply his energies to making money in the easiest manner possible.

Almost every post had brought him letters from his attentive agent, advising him of sales or purchases, and enclosing bills or cheques for signature. The postscripts usually contained some nice smooth fraternal sentiments which touched Christopher's susceptible feelings like horse-radish, and made his eyes water.

He had also received many letters from Julia Doveskin, filled with love and orthographical errors ; but the former blinded him to all defects. The last *billet-doux* expressed in glowing terms her fond anticipation of welcoming him back with open arms on Saturday night, as she believed "old Nick had returned to his den at Cockleorum;" and she added, "Before another Saturday night comes, you will be my own darling Kit for ever. Our hearts will be tied together with a bond stronger than cat-gut, as the poet remarks."

"Precious girl!" exclaimed Christopher, with rapture, after he had read the delicate epistle twice, and had kissed it times out of number. "Charming Juley! What would I give to clasp you to my heart now—this very minute! Crikey! how I should like it! Let me see, now, this is Wednesday: three days more to wait seems a long time, and I don't think I can endure it. I have a good mind to go home to-morrow, as uncle has left town. I don't see why I should stay any longer living this humdrum sort of life. A little of this rural felicity—as they call it—is well enough; but I am getting tired of it; and old Toddle is beginning to treat me to too much moral philosophy and family devotion. Besides, I want to get measured for a pair of kid boots and a new satin waistcoat, to be married in; and to get my hair cut. I have many other little matters to put straight, too.

"I *will* go home to-morrow, so that's decided," he musingly remarked, after a few minutes' cogitation; then rubbing his hands, he added, "How delightfully surprised the dear girl will be to hear my rat-tat at the front door to-morrow night! How she will rush to meet me, with her face all over smiles of endearing welcome! How she will devour me with kisses, and cuddle me in her soft arms! Jingo! I'll go down to-morrow!"

Mr. Toddle was not surprised at his young friend's sudden determination. He well knew his erratic disposition; indeed he had less confidence in the stability of the poor youth than he had in his own black servant, Mutton. And knowing from experience that, if his wayward guest had resolved to go, he would find excuses for so doing, even at the expense of truth itself, Mr. Toddle refrained from questioning him on his motives for going, and from pressing him to stay.

On the following morning Christopher went on board the steamer for Sydney, taking with him a little basket of prawns, as a present for Aunt Gorgor, and a "pretty Joey," in a wooden

cage, for Julia. Soon after the steamer put to sea, a strong head-wind sprang up; and the sea got so rough that at dinner-time not more than five passengers, including Christopher, were well enough to sit up to the table.

"Allow me the pleasure of wine with you," said a gentleman with whom Christopher had talked freely, on the way down the river, on the present scarcity of horse fodder; and to whom he had stated that he (Christopher) was a large speculator in that commodity, through his agent, Mr. Thugman, whom the gentleman seemed to know well.

"Thank you all the same, Sir. Perhaps you will excuse me," said Christopher, hesitatingly. "Hem! I don't take wine."

"Teetotaller, eh?" remarked the other, with a grimace, and a shrug of pity.

"O dear no. That is to say, in practice only—not pledged, you know—'Britons never shall be slaves.' Ha, ha! The fact is, I find I am far better without wine, or stimulants of any kind, and I don't intend to drink any more; but as for enslaving my free will with a pledge, I never thought of doing such a thing. I hope I am more of a man than virtually to confess that I cannot control my appetites. I would take a glass if I felt I needed it, as a medicine, you know."

"Exactly! that's just what I say; and I find a few glasses of sherry capital medicine—on shipboard especially. Here, help yourself."

"I would rather not, Sir," drawled Christopher. "The fact is, I mean to abstain for a month."

"Pooh, pooh! take a glass of wine, or you will be sea-sick directly," said the gentleman, passing the decanter. "You are not breaking a pledge, or I would not ask you to drink. Take a glass or two as medicine, if you won't take it for good fellowship's sake. That is a drop of Duff's 'Double Diamond.' Try it."

Christopher blushed, as a momentary recollection of his promise to Mr. Toddle entered his mind. But he had signed no pledge—as his intelligent friend opposite had remarked. His mere word he, perhaps rightly, estimated of no consequence at all; besides, Mr. Toddle was not there to see him. He filled his glass; and, of course, immediately after he had emptied it, he began to crave for more. He could not be so shabby as to drink twice out of his friend's decanter, so he called for a bottle of wine, and before it was emptied he had bought fifty tons of barley straw, warranted *oaten hay*, from the talkative gentleman,

and had got tipsy into the bargain. When he was unable to drink any more, he staggered on deck for his bag, and making a pillow of it, he lay down on the sofa and went to sleep.

Upon awaking from his long nap, he found the lamps lighted in the saloon; and from the way they were swinging about, and other symptoms, he perceived that the sea had increased; in fact, the ship was labouring against a furious southeasterly gale, and nearly all the passengers were lying in their berths, suffering from sea-sickness and the fear of death.

Christopher put on his overcoat, and ascended to the deck; but he soon hastened below again, with his face blanched with terror. The night was intensely dark, save when the blue lightning played about the masts, and half blinded the startled crew. The wind howled in its fury, and blew the sails into shreds. The sea ran terrifically high, and ever and anon broke on board, smashing bulwarks, and washing cargo and live stock off the decks, occasionally descending to the fore-cabin, and threatening to swamp the vessel altogether.

Christopher's head throbbed from the effects of his late excess, while his heart quailed with the horrors of death, which seemed inevitable; for one of the crew had told him that the "fore-castle was full of water, and the ship was getting down by the head." Suddenly he remembered his "caul," and his hope revived in a minute. "How lucky Ma thought of buying that magic life-preserver from the old wooden-legged 'Greenwich Goose!'" he muttered, as he blundered past his prostrate fellow-voyagers, towards his bag. On opening it, however, to his chagrin, he found that it contained only a few shirts and socks, a quart pot, a pair of corduroy breeches, a blue blanket, and a horse-pistol; so it was clear to him at once that he had brought some other passenger's black bag from the deck, in mistake for his own. The steward was appealed to, and, of course, knew nothing about it, but supposed Christopher's bag "was under the tarpaulin on the after skylight, and he would get it when they got to Sydney."

"But I want it now, for there is something in it that I must have, and can't do without," said Christopher, looking so distressed, that an old gentleman, who was lying on a sofa near him, quietly asked "if it was anything he could accommodate him with?"

"It's my caul that I want," whined Christopher, beginning to cry. "I ought to have had it round my neck instead of in my bag. Whatever shall I do?"

"Pray what is the use of a caul round your neck?" asked the old gentleman.

"Use of it? Why, to save me from drowning, to be sure. Mine is a very good one,—cost five pounds. I suppose you can't lend me one, can you, Sir?"

"Not I, indeed! I don't deal in such devilry; but I can lend you something that will save you from hanging," said the old gentleman, producing a pocket Bible. "You read that earnestly, Sir, and you will find something really worth trusting to in such a time of need as this; ay, at all times, and in all places. Caul, indeed! Pshaw! I hope you have lost it. I had imagined that all such foolery was confined to the few dark places of the earth that the rays of truth have not yet enlightened. A pig's bladder, or an empty pickle bottle, would do more to save you from drowning than your carpet-bag full of cauls."

The steamer continued to plunge into the heavy seas to a dangerous degree, and everything moveable on the fore part of the deck had been washed overboard. All the passengers below, except the old gentleman just noticed, were more or less alarmed. The Captain of an American whaler was on board; and as he from time to time entered the saloon from the deck, a score of anxious inquirers would put their heads out of their berths to ask, "How's the weather now, Captain?"

"Very blue! very blue!" was the laconic reply of the Yankee skipper. At another time he would say, in answer to a similar question, "Very greasy! very greasy!" and they were at liberty to interpret that information according to their several fancies or fears; for they got no further explanation from the imperturbable old whaler.

About midnight, there was a sudden shout from the look-out man, "Lighthouse on the lee bow!" It sounded like a verdict of Not Guilty to the erst despairing passengers; and their faces seemed to reflect the welcome glare of the lantern on the cliffs. In another hour they were alongside the wharf in Sydney: their past dangers were forgotten, and their merciful deliverance was forgotten likewise. Indeed, some were inclined to regard it as a joke after all, and said funny things about their late "ups and downs." But the sallow faces of the majority looked anything but appreciative of *facetiæ* just then; and no one laughed but the jokers themselves, and the old gentleman before named, who laughed at the jokers; for he had observed they were the persons who were most alarmed in the time of danger.

The Captain of the steamer, who had been for many hours exposed on the paddle-box to the full fury of the storm, had to be carried below in a state of complete exhaustion. His passengers gratefully acknowledged that they owed the preservation of their lives to his skill and endurance. But though several of them were rich men, and the Captain was comparatively a poor man, with a family, they forgot to give him a trifle towards buying flannel for his rheumatic limbs, when he shall be by and by laid up in ordinary, like an unseaworthy old hulk.

Having found his luggage on the skylight, Christopher hired a cab, and drove to Cockatoo Lodge. His friends would be in bed, he was sure; but he anticipated how eagerly they would rise to open the door, at the sound of his well known rat-tat-tat. What a rapturous meeting they would have! What a thrilling account he would give them of the awful dangers he had escaped, and how terribly frightened everybody was but himself! How nice a few prawns and some bottled stout would be! and how Aunt Gorger would relish them, after she had rubbed her eyes open! Those were some of his reflections as he rode along; and when he drew near to the house, his rapturous excitement almost stopped his breath. Already he felt, in imagination, the soft arms of his Julia clasping him (with the force of forty sisters) to her heart, while her tender, sympathizing words flowed into his ears, like the mellifluous notes of a flute just washed out with warm milk and water.

His surprise was great, when the cab stopped before the Lodge, to perceive lights in the parlour, and the front door wide open. "Gracious me! is Aunt Gorger dead, I wonder?" he soliloquized. "Or has that mysterious sympathy, which Juley often tells me exists between us, informed her that I am coming home, and she is sitting up for me? That's it, I dare say. Darling girl!"

Having paid the cabman, Christopher took his bag and the basket of prawns in one hand, and his parrot-cage in the other, and entered the house, but very softly, in order to increase their joyful surprise. He pushed open the parlour door with his foot, and walked inside, when, lo! to his unutterable horror, he saw a burly, bearded sailor sitting on the sofa, with his arm round Julia's waist, and the table before them covered with bottles and glasses, shrimp skins, trotter bones, and cigar ashes.

Christopher gave vent to an awful groan, such as could only be imitated by a broken-hearted bullock. Simultaneously, his

luggage dropped from his palsied hands, and he stood transfixed, with eyes and mouth extended, and his hat, as usual, on the back of his head; while "pretty Joey" was fluttering about in his wooden cage, shrieking, "How are you?" which was all he knew of plain English; and even that seemed more than his master knew, for he did not speak a word; in fact, he seemed as if he were struck silly.

"Hallo, shipmate! who are you? And what the blessing do you want here?" demanded the sailor, starting up in a fighting attitude. "Back out of this, I say, Mr. Snapperhead, or whatever your name is, or I'll knock bootjacks out of you in less than two minutes."

"He's m-m-me bro-brother. Don't hit him, B-B-Bob," said Julia, in clipping accents, which plainly betokened that she was drunk. "It's—it's only m-me bro-brother Kit—hic. Let him alone, Bob." At the same time she essayed to rise, but fell back into the arms of the sailor.

The individual was undoubtedly of a serene disposition who thus addressed a presumptuous dragoon: "Sir, you have kissed my wife, you have kicked my shins, you have pulled my nose, and called me a thief; and if you carry these indignities *much* farther, you will rouse the lion within me." But Christopher's patience was scarcely less marked, and there was no sign of his lion being roused. Possibly the huge fists of the burly Bob made the animal crouch out of sight; or perhaps astonishment had struck him dull. Christopher's softer feelings were not dormant, however; and after vainly trying to scare down his emotions by a variety of hideous facial contortions, he burst into a roaring agony of grief, which might have melted a sandstone Julia, or a wooden sailor.

At that minute, the husky voice of Aunt Gorger demanded, "What's the row?" and in another minute she appeared in her night-gear, her bloated face being set off by a dirty frilled night-cap. As soon as she saw Christopher, she grinned pleasantly, and hiccoughed out:

"Hallo! it's Cock-Robin come home agin, I do declare. How are you, Co-Cockee, my boy—hic! didn't expect you. What have you got in the basket?" At the same time, she hugged the astounded youth to her breast, knocked his hat off in her ecstasy, and half-stifled him with rum-flavoured kisses. Meanwhile, the sailor sat and laughed till he shook the neighbourhood; and Julia muttered, with half-closed eyes, "Ki-kiss him again, Auntie; he's a go-good fellow;" while pretty Joey

kept shrieking out the question, "How are you?" without pausing for an answer. Altogether, there was a commotion in the house such as is not often seen in quiet circles, and its influence on Christopher's spirits was soon manifest.

If anything in the world would rouse him speedily, it was the wilful mutilation of his patronymic, of which he was justly proud. Even the addition of a single consonant would annoy him worse than a knock on the nose, any day. To be called Cock-Robin, and Cockee, in the presence of a roaring sailor, and that, too, by his friends,—his relations, he might almost say,—stung his spirit into fury. His lion aroused as savagely as if a blacksmith's anvil had fallen on his tail; and had the sailor been a small man, it is probable he would never have ranked A.B. again, or ranked anything else but a bad-looking corpse. But he was too big to be punished; so Aunt Gorger suffered for all.

"Leave me alone, you nasty old woman," screamed Christopher, struggling from her, and punching her right and left in her eyes, nose, and mouth, until she fell backwards into the chimney, cursing loudly. He next yelled a fiendish yell at the sailor, and made a face at Julia, which was meant to strike her wretched; at the same time, he kicked the parrot's cage to pieces, and threw the basket of prawns at Aunt Gorger's head; then picking up his bag, he rushed out of the house, followed by the sailor with a poker in his hand.

He soon outran his tipsy pursuer, when he paused to take breath; and after a few minutes' consideration, he determined to drown himself as soon as possible, and thus end all his miseries on earth, and spite the perfidious Julia, too. With that object in view, he walked down towards the Market Wharf, cursing Aunt Gorger and the sailor as he went. Fortunate was it for him, on that occasion, that he had a vacillating mind: for before he reached the end of the street, his purpose faltered, and when he got to the water, it looked so cold and dark, that he shudderingly resolved to postpone his plunge till daylight.

He accordingly turned from the spot, and soon after entered a public-house, which was frequented by boatmen, and was kept open all night. After drinking two glasses of brandy in quick succession, he staggered into a bedroom, and, without taking off his clothes, he threw himself on the bed, and there he lay, tossing about in a state of mental and physical excitement, which words cannot describe.

Wild were his thoughts as he lay on that miserable bed ; deep as the grave, and desperately wicked, were his plots throughout that dismal night. At one time, he had resolved to buy a revolver, and shoot Aunt Gorger, Julia, and the sailor, and finally to shoot himself, after setting fire to Cockatoo Lodge. Practical obstacles coming in the way of his carrying out that scheme satisfactorily, he next thought of buying a keg of blasting powder, and blowing them all up at once, and himself too. That plot, too, was seen to be impracticable, as there was no cellar to the Lodge. Then he thought of sending a box of squibs, wildfire, and detonating devils, which would blow their eyes out, and blight them all over with ugliness for life. That scheme, too, involved impossible details ; so finally he determined upon starting off at daybreak, post-haste, to Bong-Bong, and getting his friend Slyver to come to Sydney, and assist him in murdering the sailor in a gentlemanly manner ; and afterwards to advise him how to make Aunt Gorger and the perfidious Julia ashamed of themselves.

CHAPTER XLIII.

CHRISTOPHER goes to Bong-Bong, and discovers the Duplicity of Mr. Slyver. Tiresome Journey to Billy-Bong in a Butcher's Cart. Christopher's Horror at finding that he had been victimized by Mr. Shicer. Gloomy Letter to his Sister Sophy. Comforts himself with Brandy. Returns to Sydney.

NEXT morning Christopher started for Bong-Bong, with his body and mind in a wretched state of debility. He did not call upon his agent, for he dreaded that person's cavernous eyes; but feared still more the disastrous news he might communicate; for horse fodder had had a sudden fall, and Hookey and Son had failed, for the third time.

Nothing very unusual occurred on his journey to Berrima. The horses bolted while descending a mountain; but when they got to the bottom they were luckily prevented from doing damage, by bushrangers, who stopped them, then rifled the coach and passengers' pockets, and read all the letters in the mail bags that were interesting to them. Christopher was robbed of his watch and a bad half-crown, which the cabman had given him the night before. He managed to secrete his purse in the cushion of the coach, but he lost Lizzie's locket: one of the bushrangers rudely remarking, as he snatched it from the neck of the tearful youth, that it would just do for his gin Sally Soot; and she would think it was a real "ticker," if he pulled that lump of cow's hair out of it.

The coach at length arrived at Berrima, when Christopher hired another conveyance, and reached Bong-Bong without further mishap. Upon his asking the landlord of the inn at which he stopped, the nearest way to Bull's-Hide, Gunyah, the man stared at him dubiously for a minute, then laughed in his face. Christopher was naturally chagrined at the cool impudence of the man; but curbed his impatience to knock him down, and asked, in a testy tone, if he knew Jacob Chizzleton, Esq., when the landlord calmly winked at the youth, and said, "Walker."

The said landlord was a strong man, so Christopher merely turned away in disgust, and hastened to the Post Office, where he supposed he would get more intelligible information. But, on inquiring there, he was told that Mr. Chizzleton was a myth, and Bull's-Hide, Gonyah, was nowhere. He then inquired for Frederick Fitzchowse Slyver, Esq., when he was shown some letters addressed to that unknown personage, which he at once recognised as the letters he himself had written.

The conviction that Slyver was an impostor, burst upon him like an avalanche; and the mystery of the altered cheques was solved, as well as other matters which had begun to cause him misgiving.

In a state of excitement which bush brandy did not at all tend to allay, he sat down, after he had returned to the inn, and wrote the following epistle to his sister. The substance of that letter—or one something like it—in due course appeared in print, after having been illuminated and elongated by the fanciful genius of Cousin Solomon in London; and doubtless it prevented a few timorous ones from venturing either their persons or their property to the antipodes.

“BONG-BONG, (*far in the bush,*)

“MY OWN DEAR DARLING SISTER,

“I KNOW not what to do to kill time till the cart starts, unless I kill myself, which I am strongly tempted to do; so I take my pen in hand, to write you these few lines, in order to save my life. If you could only see your wretched brother now, your heart would melt with tender sympathy. O, Sophy, I am so ill, so dejected, so desperately wretched, that I wish I were in our cold marble tomb at Tooting; indeed, the ardent desire to be buried as becomes a Cockle, and have my memory decorated with verses, alone deters me from killing myself at once, this very minute: so you can judge of my misery.

“But pray do not let my mournful strain distress you, dearest. It will relieve me to pour out my overload of woe into a compassionate ear like yours, Sophy; but I hope it will not make you uneasy. I wish you were with me to share my lot; but that would perhaps be unpleasant to you, and I would not grieve you for the world. O that I had the wings of an albatross or a gull, that I could fly over the thousands of watery mountains into your loving arms this moment!

“Ah! Sophy, what I have suffered lately I never can tell anybody. Language is too weak to describe it. I have proved

the hollowness of everything and everybody; and I hate the world, for there is nothing in it worth looking at, especially in this part of it. I can truly sympathize with the forlorn maid in that touching little song you used to sing in happy days gone by:—

“By her lover falsely slighted,
All her hopes were early blighted,
With the world no more delighted,
Poor Mary Anne!”

“Poor thing! I pity her from my heart; for I dare say she was an emigrant girl.

“Sophy dear! I want you to tell Cousin Solomon to write a book directly, and I will pay for it, if it does not pay itself. Tell him to say everything he can think of to frighten people from coming to this cannibal country;—to warn folks with money, that if they come here with it they will surely be robbed and half murdered, as I have been; and to warn folks without money, that if they come here they will be starved to death, and trodden into turnip-tops,—that is to say, into bone dust for dressing turnips; for the barbarians will not take the trouble to bury paupers; and if they do, the wicked boys will steal their bones, and sell them to make manure, or animal charcoal, as they call it.

“Tell Solomon to tell everybody to stay at home, and not to believe what anybody says about this golden land, which is all brazen fiction, invented by selfish persons, to catch simpletons. Why, half the gold is lead, gilded over like the gingerbread nuts at Greenwich fair, that we used to buy at tenpence a pound. I have proved it; for I bought a lump myself from a Chinaman, and nicely I lost by it too,—it was only fit to make bullets, or to mend saucepans.

“I retract all I have ever written in favour of this land from Cape Leeuwin to Nobbys, which is all I have seen of it at present, and much more than I wish to see again. If I have said a syllable in favour of anybody at all, I made a mistake, and am sorry for it. The bush is full of snakes, soldier ants, hornets, and horribly naked black gins, who would scratch you to death for a fig of tobacco, or ‘tikee pence,’ as they vulgarly pronounce sixpence,—the nasty things! The towns are full of vile men, and awfully wicked women, with mau-traps, mad dogs, and gully holes in every street.

“Ah, Sophy! if I could tell you how dreadfully I have been treated and cheated, you would flee from mankind for ever, as

loathingly as I do from womankind. Blow upon blow has dented my poor heart like an old hat, and I feel I am nearly mad : but I will have awful revenge before I die, then I shall be satisfied. If I said the girls out here are pretty, I am very sorry for it : they are very ugly and frightfully deceitful, Sophy, as I have proved ; and my heart is breaking in consequence. I cannot tell you how shamefully I have been served by a creature who professed to fill your place, dearest, and to be my loving sister. I am afraid I have lost all my blue boxes ; but don't say anything to Ma about that trouble.

“ Only think, too, Sophy : Slyver is a rascal and a rogue ; in fact, a thorough swindler. I hope you have not been influenced by anything I previously wrote, to give up Jacob Moon. Slyver is the very reverse of what I told you he was. He has robbed me, Sophy, and deceived me in a scandalous manner. I have been wronged by every one, and in every way. I have been winked at and called ‘ Walker ’ by the landlord of the very house I am now sitting in ; and I cannot change my lodgings, because this is the only inn in Bong-Bong, and I wish I was out of it.

“ You will perhaps say this letter is rather incoherent, or even wild. I know you will think so ; but how can I write calmly with a tornado in my breast and fire-balls in my brain ? How can I write warmly—even to my sister, when I feel that the sex to which she belongs have done me such grievous bodily harm ? But I am going to take terrible vengeance on those who have so cruelly crushed my heart, and picked my pockets, and then I will leave this land for ever. Yes, brilliant as my prospects are of amassing wealth, and consequently of being influential while I live, and universally respected when I die,—as the saying is,—I cannot stay here, with bitter remembrances haunting me like old bogies. I will return to my loving kindred and obscurity as soon as I can close my business affairs, which are now hateful to me. In fact, everything is hateful to me. I loathe even life itself, and wish I were a dead cow.....

“ But I am calm now, Sophy : the hurricane is hushed in my breast. I have just taken a restorative, and had a good cry. I am calmer now, and can think lucidly on my future plans. I am determined to sell my cattle, my cajeput oil, my—in short, all my various merchandise ; and though I should waive profit, and only get my money back, in good solid coin, I care not. I will realize at once for ready money, or any other money that will pass, and leave the land in disgust. When I see you I will

pour into your startled ears a detail of my unprecedented sorrows and trials, which I dare not trust on paper, lest I should be judged guilty of exaggeration.

"Yes, Sophy, I am coming home. As I write that dear word, *home*, a happy tingle thrills me, like getting my hair curled, and I forget my woes for a minute. By the by, I have a very pretty song, which a friend at Frogs' Flat gave me. I send it herein. You can sing it to Ma till I come home, and I am sure it will comfort her. I don't know the tune, because I never heard it; but you and Lizzie can easily make it fit a nice, tender old psalm-tune. Give my love to Lizzie. I begin to love her better than I ever did, and I wish she were here with me just now. Don't tell her that the disgusting highwayman stole her locket from me.

"You had better not show this letter to anybody but Cousin Solomon, because it is very badly written. Pshaw! I cannot get good pens, nor anything else, in this horrible country; but I shall soon say good bye to it for ever. So no more from your wretchedly ill-used, but devoted brother,

"CHRISTOPHER.

"P.S.—Annexed is the song I mentioned, but I can scarcely copy it for crying.

"I AM COMING HOME, MOTHER!"

"When the merry little spring birds
Make the woods and vales resound
With the music of their warbling,
And all nature smiles around;
When the hedge-row's beauteous blossoms
Fill the air with sweet perfume,
And the flowers that deck the meadows
Glisten out in vernal bloom;

Then with thee, so long dissever'd,
Fondly I'll again unite.
O, the glad anticipation
Fills my heart with keen delight.
There, 'mid scenes so well remember'd,
With what ecstasy I'll roam,
And recall the days of childhood
In my loved, my happy home!

Dreary days of separation,
All will then forgotten be;
Pain and toil and tribulation
Will dissolve in sympathy.

How the cherish'd prospect thrills me!
O that I could now take wing!
But I'm coming, dearest Mother!
With the welcome flowers of spring.' ”

After folding his letter, and sending it to the post, Christopher sat down and wept. Feeling a little refreshed by the exercise, he lighted a cigar, and walked to and fro in front of the inn, cogitating over his plans of operation. After a time he resolved to find his way to the station, and consult with Shicer on the easiest way of realizing on their joint venture at once, or to get that gentleman to buy the whole concern. He then wrote to his agent, advising him to realize upon his merchandise, and to close all his speculations as speedily as possible. He explained that urgent business would detain him in the country for a few weeks; and intimated that on his return to Sydney he contemplated taking his passage for England without delay, as there were strong indications of consumption in his constitution.

Upon inquiry, Christopher learned that there was no mail-coach to the Billy-Bong—nor, indeed, to any other place from Bong-Bong; but an individual, yclept “Lanky Jack,” agreed to take him across the country in a spring cart, for a consideration; so the following morning they started. The journey was a rough and a tedious one; and Christopher was often annoyed and alarmed at his guide getting drunk, and leaving him to drive the horse and cart over very rough roads, and sometimes over no roads at all; but after many ups and downs, and narrow escapes from broken bones, they at length reached Wagga-Wagga.

Christopher was thoroughly knocked up with his journey, and was terribly knocked down, too, by learning from an old resident, who professed to know every acre of land on the Billy-Bong, and every resident, too, that there were no such persons as Messrs. Dumps and Shicer; nor any such place as Diddler's Plains in the district. That report was confirmed by inquiries which Christopher made, and caused to be made, during the two succeeding days; and he was at length forced to the harrowing conclusion that his friend Shicer had cruelly victimized him; in fact, had ruined him; and the latter part of his mysterious dream in the cold lodging-house was realized.

In his half-distracted state what could he fly to for solace so handy as the brandy-bottle? What could so effectually remove the consciousness of his misery? He knew of nothing better; so he drank deep. Morning, noon, and night he drank, to drown his trouble, and he was madly merry. Lanky Jack, after

drinking himself stupid, departed from Bong-Bong, laughing at the young "flat," who had generously paid him a pound more than his stipulated fare.

Christopher spent four days at an inn at Wagga-Wagga, revelling and rioting with a score of bacchanalians, who drank at his expense, humoured his hair-brained folly, and made him believe that he was the admiration of the town and a thorough-going trump, who would "shout" like a jolly shepherd "knocking down" a year's wages.

On the fourth morning he started in the coach for Sydney, and had a merry passage down; for he was drunk the whole way, and insisted on treating all his fellow-passengers, who would drink with him, at every inn they stopped at. His cheques were readily taken, as long as he could sign them legibly; for his reputation of being a young "nob on the spree," with lots of cash and houses, and land to boot, had inspired his rustic creditors with confidence. He only wished Launcelot Whiffin and a few of the other London "bricks" were with him, and they would be in honour bound to confess that they never had had such a "lark" in their lives before. The clothes in his travelling-bag Christopher divided among three bushmen who sat in the back part of the coach, laughing at everything he did or said. His shaving tackle he forced upon an old Scotchman, beside him, with a long beard; and finally he flung the empty bag over a bridge, wittily remarking, as he did so, "What's the odds, so long as you're happy?" He then proceeded to give his admiring friends around him a full description of his estate and effects, real and personal, which occupied him till the coach reached the next house of call, when he shouted for "Champagne for all hands.".....

But a fearful reckoning was approaching, sullenly as a storm-cloud. *Delirium tremens*, with all its horrors, was creeping into his whirling brain, fevering his blood, and charging every nerve in his system with terror unutterable. He at length reached Sydney, and drove in a cab to an hotel where he was known. His emaciated face, his glaring eyes, and his fearfully excited manner, were observed by the landlord, who prudently declined to supply him with the drink he demanded; and with difficulty prevailed upon him to go to bed. The fatigues of the journey caused him soon to fall asleep; but it was only a short respite to his wretchedness. In a few hours he awoke in a state of fearful nervous excitement. All was dark and silent; for it was past midnight. Then that hideous disease began to over-

shadow his soul, and to clasp his brain like an iron clamp. Horrible images rose before his affrighted fancy ten times more appalling than death itself. Fiends with red-hot horns lurked in every corner of the room and belched blue flames at him. Snakes hissed about his pillow, other loathsome reptiles crawled over his coverlet, and a horrible black bird, with a demon's head and claws, was perched on a chair beside him, offering him brandy out of a goblet branded "hell fire."

His agony was excruciating, and perspiration rolled from his bursting brow. He sprang from his bed in the terror of madness, and essayed to open his door; but it was fastened from without. He rushed to the window; but it was securely barred. He shrieked in an agony of despair, as he tore at an imaginary serpent, which he fancied had coiled itself round his neck; then, groping in the darkness for his coat, he seized his pocket knife, and in mad desperation determined to flee even to hell itself for relief. With all his force he drew the knife across his throat; then fell to the floor weltering in his blood, and filling the room with unearthly yells.

The inmates of the house were aroused by the terrific sounds; his door was quickly forced open; and a scene of dismay and excitement ensued, which it is not easy to depict. A surgeon was speedily sent for, who pronounced the wound dangerous, and held out but very faint hopes of his patient's recovery. The best remedies were skilfully applied; but the unfortunate youth showed very slight symptoms of rallying. After a time the doctor left him in a state of utter prostration, with orders to his attendant nurses to watch him carefully.

CHAPTER XLIV.

THE Consternation of the Family at Cockleton. Uncle Nicholas's Arrival in Sydney. Meets Mr. Toddle. Conversation of the two experienced old Colonists on several very important Subjects, which Parents should carefully study.

THE feelings of the inmates of Cockleorum Hall may easily be conceived, when the shocking news of Christopher's attempted suicide reached them, about a week after its occurrence: for though they all had a thorough contempt for the youth's inconsistencies, they had a proper affection for him as their relative.

Uncle Nicholas at once prepared to start for Sydney, and his daughter Kate kindly volunteered to accompany him, to render any assistance she could to her misguided cousin. Uncle Nicholas had failed to find his nephew on his recent visit to Sydney. He had heard from Mr. Thugman that Christopher had gone into the country for change of air, but the exact locality he could not tell.

Mr. Toddle first became aware of Christopher's rash act through the newspapers, and was more pained than surprised at it: for he had foreseen that the poor youth would assuredly drive himself mad, if he continued his vicious, idle course of life: he had seen too many sad cases of the sort, to be mistaken in his judgment. A few days previously he had received, by the English mail, a long letter from Tim Rafferty, begging of him, in Tim's own rich style, "to look afther young Mither Cockle, and see that his inimies didn't murther his character intirely, as they were trying to do as fast as they could." Then followed a lengthy account of the grave charges preferred by certain residents in Sydney, which the reader is already acquainted with, and which Tim emphatically declared to be "the dirtiest lies that iver were invinted by Satan himself, or any other out-and-out rascal."

Uncle Nicholas and Mr. Toddle met in Christopher's chamber. Although known to each other by repute, they had never had previous personal intercourse. They found Christo-

pler in a deplorably shattered state of body, and his mind seemed totally wrecked. But the doctor assured them that though his sufferings had been excessive, the crisis of his malady was past; and there was room for hope of his recovery. The greatest vigilance had been necessary, and was still used, to prevent his tearing the bandages from his throat during the fearful paroxysms of his disease; but the wound itself was not so dangerous as it had at first seemed to be.

Of course his friends could hold no communication with the sufferer, for he was totally unconscious of their presence; in fact, as he lay on his couch, he looked the picture of life in death. Mr. Toddle and Uncle Nicholas presently adjourned to a private room; and the latter soon perceived the fatherly interest which Mr. Toddle felt in the youth; so he freely expressed his own opinions, and produced a letter which he had recently received from his brother Noah respecting the accusations against Christopher, before alluded to. A long discussion then ensued, when it was deemed prudent to postpone their inquiries until the youth was sufficiently recovered to be questioned on the unpleasant subject. In the mean time, they agreed to quietly gather what information they could respecting his pecuniary affairs and his mercantile speculations; Mr. Toddle kindly promising to remain in Sydney for that purpose.

"I have been disposed to severely censure my brother for sending that simple youth from home at all; but especially for making him a sort of golden bait for all the carnivorous animals which his softness would naturally draw around him," remarked Mr. Cockle. "My brother's letter, however, explains a good deal which I did not previously understand; and shifts some of the blame from himself to others. I can see that he has yielded to the foolishly-fond wishes of his wife and daughter, and acted against his better judgment in this matter. Perhaps, it was natural enough, too; but it has been a sad error in this case, and will overload all their hearts with sorrow. Noah is an easy-going old fellow; dotingly fond of his children, but not careful to exercise that vigilance or authority which he is in duty bound to do. For the sake of peace in his home, he says, he has been accustomed to yield minor points: thus his boy has been spoiled; but what his girl is like, I do not know: perhaps she is spoiled too.

"In sending his son away with a couple of thousand pounds in his pocket, my brother was conscious that it was not a

politic act,—in fact, I think he quite expected the money would be wasted; but he carelessly argued that it did not matter much, as he had plenty more. Alas! he did not sufficiently reflect on the probability of the boy's wasting his health, his morals,—ay, his body and soul,—as well as his money. Noah is a shrewd man, too; but he has never been from home, and is, to a degree, ignorant of the peculiar dangers which his poor boy has fallen a victim to.

"Ah, Mr. Toddle," continued Mr. Cockle, solemnly, "it is culpable folly of parents to pamper their children, and allow them to grow up to maturity without learning the important lesson of self-dependence. There is a melancholy example of that in yonder chamber. Had my brother made it imperative on his son to learn some useful trade, business, or profession, it is probable he would have been content to stay at home, where an ample fortune was in perspective; at all events, he would have learned to be of some use in the world, and been saved from much suffering. And had he then chosen to come out here, he would have had his acquired knowledge to turn to good account; and if he were left for a time dependent on his own efforts, he would, in all probability, have made his way in the colony as thousands of aspiring youths have done. And, by and by,—when he could have been prudently entrusted with capital,—my brother might have indulged his liberal nature, and would, perhaps, have seen good results therefrom. Giving an infant a box of razors to play with would be quite as rational as giving the command of capital to simple, inexperienced youths such as my nephew. His money has doubtless been the cause of his miseries; for there is nothing in the lad himself to attract even the bare notice of gay men of the world. You are not quite so old a colonist as myself, Mr. Toddle; but I have no doubt you have observed that many of the most wealthy and influential men in the land have worked their way up from comparative poverty and obscurity."

"I could not fail to observe that, with so many proofs daily before my eyes," replied Mr. Toddle. "On the other hand, I could shock even you, Sir, with pictures of misery, mischief, and profligacy, which some young persons have exhibited, who have either come here with large capital, or who have inherited it from parents who have toiled in the colony nearly all their days to amass the wealth which their spendthrift heirs have employed in ruining themselves, and sowing ruin around them. Often have I seen the old proverb realized, 'Fathers drive the

plough, and their sons drive tandem;’ and I have sometimes been disposed to endorse the judgment of the cynical sage, who remarked, that ‘parents who are niggardly penurious during their lives, in order to leave large fortunes to their children, thereby throw a rope round their necks by which the devil hangs them.’ I have known many young men, who have come out here with the most expensive outfits, but with minds as barren as furze bushes. Some have brought moderate, others large, capital with them; and after a course of extravagance and dissipation which exhausted their finances and their bodily strength too, they have left the colony mere wrecks of men, and have carried away an ill report of our good land. Their shattered constitutions they have attributed to the insalubrity of our fine climate; and their non-success has been charged to anything but to the true cause,—namely, their absolute folly and idleness. And in addition to the many persons they have injured within the colony by their profligate example, and their positive acts of debauchery, they have, perhaps, by their croaking falsehoods or exaggerations deterred many a promising youth from coming here, where he would in all probability have risen to affluence and honour, and have been a benefit to the land.

“Many years ago,” continued Mr. Toddle, “an intelligent youth, who had recently arrived from England, got within the little circle of ‘young sparks,’ with whom I was on intimate terms in those days. He was not very cordially received, however; for he was a stranger in the land, and never boasted of his money, or his influential relatives, and he wore kip boots and a country-cut coat. Still, it was clear that he possessed good abilities; for he was employed by one of the leading firms in Sydney. I remember I had been on a visit for a month to some friends in the interior, and on my return to Sydney I was warmly welcomed by my young companions at a sort of evening *soirée*. Perceiving that our new acquaintance, Fred Mount, was not present, I inquired for him, when one of the party, with an excited, injured look, exclaimed, ‘What do you think, Toddle? The fellow came out in the steerage.’ ‘What a horrible character he must be!’ I replied, laughing heartily, as I remembered that I had come out in the steerage too, and was not aware that my lofty young friends were unacquainted with the fact. It appeared that during my absence they had discovered the shocking circumstance of Mr. Mount’s not coming to the colony as a cabin passenger, and they ‘cut’ him at once;

and shortly afterwards they 'cut' me, for fraternizing with him. But he soon mounted high over all our heads, and is this day one of the 'heads of the people,' with the high distinction of 'Honourable' prefixed to his name.

"I heartily wish I could impress on the minds of parents in other lands these important considerations, before they decide on sending their children to our colonies. First of all, to be sure that their sons are of industrious and temperate habits; for it is a very dangerous expedient to send idle, profligate youths to this side of the world, with a view to their reformation. A long voyage might possibly improve the quality of their 'Cape Madeira wine,' but it rarely has a beneficial influence on dissolute children, if left to follow their own unbridled wills. Parents may thus get their racketsy sons out of their sight, certainly; but it is awfully probable that they will be out of their sight *for ever*. Secondly, I would warn parents, with all the earnestness I could assume, to be doubly careful how they send their young daughters to this land, and to be sure that they are under proper protection. Scores—or I may say, hundreds—of broken hearts have resulted from a neglect of that common-sense precaution. Many poor friendless girls have been lured to ruin on the voyage to this colony, of which sad truth I could give you many touching examples. And tenfold more have been waylaid, soon after their arrival, by designing beasts, who glory in the number of innocent girls they have debauched, and sent to the 'Refuge,' to pine away, like flowers blasted by hot winds; or, worse still, left to walk the gas-lit streets, with brazen boldness, until drink and disease cut short their career, and carry them to the grave before they have reached life's summer.

"The 'social evil,' as it is delicately called, is an awful curse to this city and colony," continued Mr. Toddle, with increased seriousness; "but, like many other evils in the world, it admits of only one effectual remedy; that is, the inculcation of sound religious principles, which parents should make it their paramount duty to attend to. Mothers, especially, should strive to instil virtuous principles into their children, both by precept and example, and keep a vigilant watch over them. Parents should be watchful, too, against the plots and schemes of those dangerous animals yclept 'fast young men,' and warn their sons and daughters against companionship with such. A girl may as well tie herself for life to a dead body, as marry a profligate young man in the hope of reforming him; and the old conceits which are often quoted, that 'reformed rakes make the best

husbands,' or that 'licentiousness denotes manly spirit,' are as false as they are dangerous.

"There is a lamentable anomaly in society which I should like to see remedied. Some mothers will look with scorn and loathing upon the miserable victims of seduction in our streets, while they would open their drawing-rooms for the reception of the men who had thus dishonoured their name, under the fashionable plea of 'sowing their wild oats.' Parents who merely possess common prudence will be watchful lest those contemptible reprobates sow wild oats around their cultivation, and cause them to reap a harvest of sorrow.

"I could give you a description of a scene that I witnessed in an adjoining colony, which would strengthen my previous remarks better than all the arguments I could use. But perhaps I am detaining you, Mr. Cockle."

"Not at all, Sir," said Mr. Cockle. "I feel vastly interested in the subject, which is of such vital importance to the moral and social welfare of the community. Go on with your story, Sir, if you please."

"I will just say, lest I forget it, that I have a manuscript treatise in my possession, which I should like you to read, Mr. Cockle; indeed, I wish every parent in the land could read it. It is written by one of the cleverest physicians in Sydney, and has opened my eyes to the alarming prevalence of another terrible evil, which it behoves parents and guardians carefully to watch against. It is preying upon the health and morals of many young persons, who are unconscious of the fearful consequences of the passion which they are secretly indulging, and which will as surely wreck their mental and physical powers, as a worm at its root will destroy the vitality of a young tree. I think you will understand to what I allude, Mr. Cockle; but if you do not, I would refer you, for fuller information, to Todd's 'Student's Manual,' chapter iii. Now I will go on with my story, Sir."

CHAPTER XLV.

MR. TODDLE'S Story, embodying Warnings to Young Female Emigrants and to the "Old Folks at Home." Sudden Re-appearance of Tim Rafferty.

"SOME time ago I went to a neighbouring colony for a month's recreation," began Mr. Toddle. "During my stay in the capital, I visited nearly all the public institutions, including the gaols, Benevolent Asylum, Hospital, Lunatic Asylum, &c.; and I could tell you some thrilling incidents, which I met with in my rounds. While inspecting the burial-ground of the latter institution I observed—among many others—a stone, with the simple inscription, 'Mary Smith, died, aged twenty-one years.' Ah, Sir, there was an awful lesson for parents in that unfortunate girl's short history; but I must not begin a relation of it now, or I shall not be able to tell you my other harrowing story.

"One day a benevolent-looking old gentleman called on me at my lodgings, and asked if I would visit the Female Refuge on the next Sunday evening and address the inmates. Thinking he had mistaken my vocation, I told him that I was not a parson: when he said, he 'knew that, but he hoped I might do his poor girls good, if I would talk to them in a gentle, fatherly way.' I thought I could do that, so I promised to go; especially as he told me with a sorrowful look, that it was not often that visitors addressed the girls.

"The weather was wild and dreary on Sunday evening, and it was rather more than three miles from my lodging to the Refuge; but I never ride on Sundays, unless in a case of real necessity; so away I trudged, thinking, as I went, what I should say to instruct and comfort my expectant congregation. As I passed a hawthorn hedge,—which is rare you know in this country—I plucked a sprig of 'May,' and stuck it in a button-hole of my coat. I am fond of hawthorn blossom, Sir; for it reminds me of my merry days of boyhood, and of the hedgerows around my dear old home, far over the sea.

"Well, Sir, onward I went, and at last I reached the Refuge,

just as the master and matron were sitting down to tea ; so I sat down with them. I soon perceived that they were the right sort of pair for the important offices they held ; and I listened with much interest to the particulars they gave me of the progress of their institution, with some pleasing instances of good results of their labours. Meanwhile I could hear a number of female voices in an adjacent room, singing hymns ; and their plaintive melody had a peculiar saddening effect on my heart, such as I cannot describe. They seemed to me to be singing their own *requiem*.

“After tea I was ushered into a room, where, seated at a long table, with books before them, were about thirty females, all dressed alike in plain but neat garments. The majority of them were under twenty, and one little creature was under twelve years of age. Some of them were fine-looking girls, though evidently worn and emaciated by their profligate lives, prior to being received into the Refuge. One girl I could not but especially notice. Her face was strikingly handsome, though pale and sunken. Her eyes were large, and peculiarly lustrous, and she had a very lady-like air ; she shrunk from my glance, as though thoroughly abashed at her degraded position ; so I did not pain her by appearing to notice her again.

“I seated myself at the head of the table, and after a few introductory sentences, spoken in a conversational tone, to take away the appearance of formality in the service, I asked the girls to sing a hymn. Their voices sounded so sweetly melancholy, that I could scarcely sing a note for thinking of their parents far away, (they were nearly all emigrant girls,) and wondering if they knew the deplorable condition of their young daughters. Such musing made my heart too sad to sing, and it was only by the strongest effort that I could refrain from crying.

“After the hymn was finished, I prayed with them, then read some comforting portions of the Holy Scriptures ; for I thought it was needless to add to their misery, by telling them how awfully wicked they had been. I could see by their sorrowful looks that they all felt that keenly enough, poor things ! Then I began in a simple style to show them the way out of their misery, and they all looked as anxious as condemned prisoners, listening to a gracious reprieve from death. I have no pretension to rhetorical gifts, Mr. Cockle, still I am not wholly unpractised as a public speaker ; but I never before felt

my powers of speech so circumscribed. I stammered on with my subject; and, as it were, tried to make the poor lasses fancy I was leading them by the hand from the briers and thorns by which they were entangled, along the paths of peace into the green pastures of Paradise; and their sad faces every now and then brightened up like glimpses of sunshine on a gloomy day.

"I had been dealing pretty freely in imagery in the course of my discursive address, to which the poor girls seemed to pay breathless attention; when by and by, being at a loss for a figure to illustrate the ephemeral nature of earthly joys, I pulled the May blossom from my button-hole, and giving it a twirl, the petals fell in a shower before me. I then remarked, as the girls gazed at the hawthorn sprig which I had thrown upon the table, 'Some of you know what that is; and perhaps it reminds you of happier days, when in childhood you tripped along to the village Sunday School, with your hearts as joyous as the little birds in the hedges around you.' Then I began to draw a picture of the fragrant hedge-rows of old England, in the smiling month of May; and to show how fleeting are those beauties, compared with those in the evergreen regions above, where there is no fading away. Then I showed the plain and simple way of getting to that home of rest and peace, while the poor things looked as if they longed to go there directly.

"Suddenly the handsome girl before alluded to, began to sob audibly, which seemed to affect the others, for in a few minutes there was a general outburst of pent-up feeling, from the girls all round the table. I had touched a tender chord, and their surcharged hearts vibrated to it; for several of them—I afterward learned—had been Sunday-School scholars, and had often heard the solemn truths which I was trying to explain to them in my homely style. Most of them, too, could remember the days when they rambled in happy innocence, under the shade of Old England's fragrant hedge-rows.

"I paused a minute to steady my faltering tongue, and to wipe away my starting tears; and as I did so, I gazed around me, at the dear old master and matron, when I saw that they were weeping like heart-stricken parents at the touching scene before them. My forced composure immediately forsook me, and my tongue was powerless; not another word of sermon could I utter; so I sat down, buried my face in my handkerchief, and wept. The room resounded with sighing and sobbing,

mingled with ejaculatory prayers, which I am sure reached the pitying ears of our Father. I think, Sir, it was one of the most heart-moving scenes I ever witnessed.

“Poor girls! How I did feel for their forlorn position! What a sight would this be, I thought, for a libertine, a ‘fast young man,’ to behold! The roughest nature would surely be softened to compunction at such a scene of wreck and ruin. There they were, like withered flowers ruthlessly plucked by hard hands and cast into the mire, to be crushed under feet as refuse. There they were, heart-crushed and broken-spirited, without a hope in life. Scarcely one of them had reached the prime of womanhood; but they had the cares and sorrows of wintry old age in their breasts. All their hopes of domestic endearments were blighted; virtue, self-respect, beauty,—all blasted and withered; and there they were, helpless, hopeless, forlorn victims of man’s cruel perfidy and detestable lust. Poor things! from my heart I pitied them, and would have risked even life itself to rescue them, if it were possible.

“My weeping paroxysm was soon over, and I began to talk hopefully to them; but it would lengthen my story beyond your patience to tell you all that transpired on that occasion, Mr. Cockle: so I will simply say, that before I left the Refuge, every one of the girls professed to know the *way to heaven*; and as I shook hands at parting they each promised, in sobbing accents, to *meet me there*. I have not seen any of them since that night, Sir; but I have had, on two occasions, cheering information from the venerable master of the institution, and I do hope by and by to see some, if not all of them, in that Refuge above, where the tempter cannot tempt. Poor girls! Poor girls! May God comfort their disconsolate hearts, and guide them to that ‘rest for the weary,’ where they will be safe from the designs of men and the scorn of women!

“From the master and matron I learned a little of the histories of several of the girls, and sad disclosures they were. The handsome girl before alluded to, they told me, was very accomplished. She had been governess in a family in the city, but had been seduced by one of the officers of the ship in which she came to the colony, under the *usual* promise of marriage. When her shame became apparent, she had been summarily turned into the street by her enraged mistress; and from that time she had led a wretched life; until, worn to death’s door by want and disease, she had found her way to the Refuge to die. ‘Yes, Sir,’ said the kind old master, wiping his eyes, ‘the poor

creature is doomed. She cannot possibly live six months longer. She knows it, too, and I trust she is preparing for the awful change that awaits her. Her principal earthly anxiety seems to be lest her parents at home should hear of her wretched fate. I believe she has no relatives or friends in the colony, and she came out here about two years ago, *alone and unprotected*; and that is the case with the majority of the unfortunate girls who are admitted into this asylum.'.. ..

"I returned to my lodgings that night, Sir," added Mr. Toddle, "with my heart full of sympathy for those misguided girls whom I had just left. The next day I sent the following lines to one of the local periodicals; not with the vain hope of persuading folks that I am a poet, (for I am only a simple rhymester,) but with the honest desire of arousing the sympathies of some of the ladies of the land to the helpless condition of many of their fallen sisters around them.

"LIFT UP THE POOR FALLEN GIRL.

"O SPEAK to her in pity's kindest tones,
Sweet as the music from the shrines above;
Let your soft sighs respond to her deep moans,
And whisper words of sympathy and love.

By gentle soothing—best to woman known—
Staunch up the wounds in her poor bursting heart;
Point her to Christ, whose precious love alone
Can peace, and rest, and hope, and joy impart.

Like some frail, delicate, exotic flower,
Bow'd down before the cutting wintry blast;
That poor young victim to a villain's power
Is on the world a dreary wanderer cast.

Ah! leave her not to bitter grief a prey,
(She perhaps was tenderly and fondly train'd),
Or haply she may droop and pine away,
Like a lone bird in wiry cage enchain'd.

Or ghastly horrors of grim black despair
May seize her mind, and Satan urge her on
In dark unguarded hour to rashly dare
To rush uncall'd before God's awful throne.

Shall one sad slip from virtue's flowery way,
Once yielding to the subtle fiend's address,
Doom that poor hopeless girl *still more to stray*,
And end her days in misery and distress?

Forbid it, heaven ! In mercy now inspire
 Some gentle breasts,—with Christian ardour warm,
 Heedless of fashion's frowns, or Satan's ire,—
 To pour into her heart soft pity's balm.

Let Jesu's love—that precious, priceless gem—
 Their hearts inflame, while they her fall deplore.
 Chr st said to *her*, when no man dared condemn,
Neither do I condemn thee,—sin no more.

Say not to me that honour's rigid laws,
 Or fashion's code, forbid your sympathy.
 Perish the code which gives the wretch applause,
 And his poor ruin'd victim obloquy.

O that I were but arm'd with Gideon's sword,
 The foes of female chastity to slay !
 But hold—I read in God's most holy word,
 ' Vengeance is MINE, I surely will repay.'

Then speak to her tenderly,—let Christian love
 Your kind compassion move, your actions guide ;
 Spurn those who frown ; your conscience will approve,—
 Your God will be obey'd and glorified."

Before Uncle Nicholas could express his opinion of the foregoing sorrowful story, his attention was excited by a violent altercation, which was going on below between the waiter and a rather noisy visitor, whom the waiter was evidently unwilling to admit beyond the hall.

"Hollobulloo! an what did ye mane at all, Mr. Mutton-chops? Where did yez larn yer manners? Can't see him, indeed! Shure, I'd like to know who can see him iv I can't? Shough! What nixt will ye say, I wondher?"

"What do you want with him?" asked the waiter, pettishly.

"Shure an it's like yer imperance to ax me that same. An did yer think I'll tell my business to the likes o' you? Tut: git out wid yer, yer ragamuffin. Tell him Tim Rafferty wants to see him; that's all ye've got to do, an he'll be down here in a crack, I'll bet a penny."

"Mr Cockle is very ill,"——

"Troth, thin, ye'd betther kape out ov his sight, soh. He'll niver git well, I'll ingage, iv he sees your ugly mug ivery day."

"Be off, you drunken scamp," said the waiter, pushing Tim rudely.

"Kape yer paws off, me bhoy, as the feller sed to the tiger, an it's well for yez that ye didn't do that same to me a year

agone, or I'd a knocked yer nose as flat as a Chinaman's,—so I wud, an I cudn't ha helped meself. Now I knows betther nor to fight. Still, an all, I don't like to be mauled about by a putty-faced swab like yerself, so ye'd betther mind yer eye iv yer goin to try that trick agin, or my fisht ull be foul ov yez afore I can stop it; for there's a little dash ov the devil in me yet, as the ould Quaker sed to the thief wot stole his dinner."

While Uncle Nicholas was listening with astonishment to that extraordinary colloquy, Mr. Toddle was laughing heartily. Presently he remarked, "I know the owner of that brogue, Mr. Cockle. He is an honest Irishman, who was one of the steward's staff on board the 'Calabash.' Excuse me for a minute, if you please; I must go and prevent a rupture; for though Tim is one of the best fellows of his class that I ever met with, he has his national proneness to fight if he is imposed upon; and that waiter will certainly get a thrashing if I do not go and prevent it." Mr. Toddle then hastened down to the hall, closely followed by Mr. Cockle.

CHAPTER XLVI.

ARRIVAL of Tim Rafferty with his Wife and his Children, Barney and Norah; also his Brother Phelim and his Family. Tim rents a Cottage at Pyrmont, and Christopher goes to lodge with him. Phelim takes a Farm at Cockleton.

“OCH, be the powers! iv there isn’t Mr. Toddle himself, shure enough! Ugh! git out, cat’s-meat!” exclaimed Tim, pushing the waiter into the umbrella stand, then running up to Mr. Toddle, and seizing his proffered hand.

“Arrah, I’m rale plaised to see ye, Sir, as the skater sed to the chap wot lugged him out ov the hole in the ice. I hope yer hearty, Sir. Troth, an ye look as sthrong as Dublin stout, so ye do—an I’m glad of it, soh. By yer lave, Sir, I’ll show ye the wife as I’ve picked up this voyage, an she’s middlin stout, too. Hold on a bit, iv ye please. Hoy, Sally!” added Tim, putting his hand outside the doorway, “bear a hand this way, darlint; here’s the very jintleman as I’ve been tellin yez about no ind ov times. Lower yer umbrella an come inside, honey!”

In another minute Tim led in his wife, (*née* Sally Mander,) a buxom, happy-looking woman of forty, or perhaps forty-one; dressed in the fashion of 1820. Sally blushed, and bobbed respectfully, as Tim proudly presented her to Mr. Toddle, who shook hands with her kindly, then introduced the pair to Mr. Cockle, who likewise warmly saluted them, and wished them prosperity in the new land of their adoption.

“Shure an I’ve got Barney an Norah on board the ship, an the crathers wanted to come ashore wid us in their new brogans, to see this big city, ony I was afeard they’d be starin about em, an maybe get knocked through a shop windee. An I’ve brought out me brother Phelim an his wife, an ivery head ov his family to boot,—ivery Rafferty belongin til our jination has come out altagether, in one ship, as safe and as sound as new cast-iron corner posts, an troth we’re all goin to stop here till we die, iv our lives be spared. Och, good luck ta

the dhry land! I've had enough ov the say, an I've done wid it intirely, as Bob the boatswain sed when he married the rich widee Malowny."

After carefully wiping their shoes on the mat, Tim and Sally went up stairs, at the kind invitation of Mr. Toddle; and by degrees the news of Christopher's illness, and the dreadful cause of it, was explained to them as briefly and as delicately as possible. Great was the grief of the tender-hearted pair at hearing the gloomy tidings. Tim poured out expressions of sorrow and indignation alternately, mingled with regrets that he "should have been sich a loony as to lave the poor young crather all alone whin he wud be sartin shure to git into mischief—as ould Mother Murphy sed whin the girl lift little Teddy alongside a jorum ov hot butthermilk."

Sally sat and wept, and wondered what her poor mistress and Miss Sophy would think about it, and began to wish "she had stayed at home to comfort them, poor things!" Meanwhile, Mr. Toddle and Mr. Cockle were conversing together in another part of the room. Presently Mr. Cockle took a seat beside the troubled pair, and after a few preliminary observations, asked Tim what he proposed to do in the colony.

"Troth, Sir, I'm going to make me way right straight ahead, as the Yankee mate sed, when he pitched heels up into the main hold ov the 'Liner.' I've guv up the say altagethir, cos it's a damp sort ov business as doesn't suit my constitution—lasteways it doesn't tally wid my notions ov pace an quietness. I've brought me bist bower anchor ashore wid me, an she'll allers bring me up head to wind, I'll ingage, iv I give her cable enough," said Tim, with a loving look at his wife. "Faix, thin, ye'll niver cotch me molly-grubbin among say-sick passingers agin, like a doctor's mate lookin for dead marines in the lee scuppers; nor yit botherin me head about cracked crockery ware in an ould watch-box ov a panthry—not a bit ov it, Sir. I've had enough ov that sort ov fun—as the boy sed whin he rin away from the treadmill."

"Yes, but what are you going to do on shore, Tim?" asked Mr. Cockle.

"It's not aisy for me to tell yez that afore I know it meself, Sir, axin yer pardin. I've not quite fixed on a perfession yit, Sir; but afther I git all me traps landed an stowed away nicely, I'll be ready for anything that's honest, from humpin coals ashore to draggin a lame lady about in a dandy chair. I can turn me hand to anythin amost, trust an ould sailor for that

same, Sir. I've bin thinkin ov makin a start in the pastry line, for Sally can make pies like a master baker; an I'll warrant I can sell em fast enough, iv people ull ony buy em; an it's an aisy way ov turnin a penny—as the Gipseys sed whin he stole the donkey."

"I am afraid that trade would not pay you, Mr. Rafferty," said Mr. Cockle. "Sally's pies would be too good for the price you would get for them; and selling hot pies at a street corner would not be a very agreeable occupation for you. I think I can advise you of something better than that."

"Well, dear knows, I dont care what I does that's respectable, as the smuggler sed whin"—. Tim's speech was abruptly stopped by Sally giving him a warning nudge with her elbow, upon which he turned round and winked at her in such a ludicrously loving way, that the two old gentleman burst out laughing, while Sally stammered out a humble apology.

"I have been thinking," continued Mr. Cockle, "that you and Mrs. Rafferty might rent a cottage near to Sydney, and take my nephew to lodge with you until he is sufficiently recovered to bear the journey up to my house. It will be some time before he can get about, poor fellow; and in the mean time he will want more careful attention and quietude than he could get at an inn. What do you say to that idea?"

"Bedad, thin, yez cudn't give me a job I'd like betther nor that same, Sir. Nothin cud be more convanient in the worrld, as the drunken sailor sed whin they rolled him to the lock-up in an impty rum puncheon. Misther Toddle knows I'll take good care ov the young jintleman, an Sally ull be as good as a mother til him, iv not betther; for shure she's knowed him iver since he was a babby not much bigger nor a quart pot. Love the sowl ov the dear crather! we'll look afther him an nurse him as tinderly as iv he was a little dying kid belongin til us both; an take my word for it, too, iv any ov them caterwauling money-grubbers come cooeing for him to lead him astray agin, and pick his pockets, they'd betther look out for what they'll catch; that's all I've got to say; I'll pepper em pretty quick, as the pieman sed ov the cats on his tiles."

After a tolerably long discussion it was arranged that Tim and his wife should come the next morning, and Mr. Toddle would accompany them in search of a suitable cottage, and assist them to select necessary furniture for it.

"Och! the bright beams ov heaven on yez both!" began

Tim; but in order to stop the torrent of thanks which he and his wife were about to pour forth, Mr. Cockle asked Tim what his brother Phelim and his family intended to do in the colony.

"Troth, thin, there's no fear ov Phelim, Sir, not a bit. He'd make his way through a crowd any day, wid a sack ov soot on his head; as the owld sweep sed ov his new apprentice. I axed the young masther afore I lift Sydney last voyage, to look out for a bit ov land for Phelim, somewhere out ov town; an maybe he's done it, soh; but it's no good axin him about it now he's onsinsible, poor fellow. Anyhow, me brother's family will be right enough, so long as they can earn taties an salt, for they're not over dainty; and that sort ov rations is chape enough in this counthry."

"My nephew spoke to me about your brother, Mr. Rafferty; and I have in some degree been preparing for his arrival. I have a very good farm of fifty acres to let on my estate, which I think would suit him. The present tenant is an intemperate man; consequently he is idle and improvident. He is in arrears with his rent, and I have given him notice to quit. It is a good productive farm, if it were properly managed; but it has been neglected, and will require considerable labour to get it into a payable condition again. I am prepared to let your brother have it on easy terms, if he is the sort of man I have judged him to be from the description I have heard of him. I think Christopher said that Phelim is a wheelwright, as well as a farmer."

"So he is, Sir, an as good a one as iver put spokes in a wheel, that's a fact; and forbye that, he is as illegant a parson as iver I heard preach a sarmont widout a book; lasteways, he preaches fust-rate for a chap as niver sarved his prenticeship to the business; and I'd like yez all to hear him, soh."

"I have no doubt he will do very well in the colony, Tim. I should like to see him to-morrow, if he can conveniently come up here with you and Mrs. Rafferty. In the mean time, you can think over my other proposal."

"Troth, he'll be wid yez quick enough, Sir, I'll engage, as the ould woman sed when she scrached for her boy Mike to come an shillaley the bailiff who was taking away her pig. Ye shall see all Phelim's bhoys and girrls too, iv ye please, Sir; an ye'll say ye niver seed a dacinter lot come to the counthry,—in one ship, anyhow. The girrls are rale purty crathers, wid faces as hiny as Midsummer itself; an beside that, they are as handy a

pair as iver stitched on a poor man's buttons, or played a tune on a frying-pan. Shure, they'll be lucky bhoys as wins their hearts, though I say it for em; and it won't be any lazy rum-drinkin felow as ull do it nayther, for they've got hapes ov common sinse. The whole lot ov em are strong an hearty, an able an willing to worrk. Thin they're as sober as suckin infants; and, what's better nor all, they've got the fear ov God before their eyes."

"Then I have no hesitation in saying they will do well in this land, Tim, and will bless you for helping them to come here. I shall be proud of having them for tenants, and will do all I can to help them forward."

Next morning, soon after breakfast, Tim and Sally re-appeared at the hotel, with Phelim, and his wife and family, all dressed in their best clothes, which looked as creasy as clothes usually look after being boxed up three or four months in the hold of a ship. "New chums" are generally recognised by their wrinkled apparel and their rosy faces. Uncle Nicholas was much pleased with the appearance of the whole family; and after a somewhat lengthy negotiation,—for Phelim was a cautious man,—it was prudently resolved that he should go to Cockleton, and look at the farm, prior to making any definite arrangement; and in the mean time, his wife and family could take lodgings in Sydney, and amuse themselves in looking at some of the wonders of the great city of the South, and get the blue mould brushed off their clothes too.

Mr. Toddle, with Tim and his wife, then went out to look for a house; and after several hours' search, they found a vacant cottage at Pyrmont, which Tim said was the very identical thing itself; and Sally was in raptures with it, because it had a little plot of garden in front, with a few marigolds in it. They were both rather startled at the high rent which was asked for it; but Mr. Toddle thought that a pound a week was moderate, according to the times; so the cottage was taken. Mr. Toddle then took them to a respectable furniture shop in Sydney; and after satisfying himself that they were both better skilled in making bargains than himself, he prepared to leave them. Before going, he drew Tim aside, and put a cheque for fifty pounds into his hand, and told him, when that was spent, to come to him for more.

"Arrah! no end ov blessings on yez, Misther Toddle; but I don't want this at all, Sir. I've got lashins ov money ov me

own an Sally's, and I'll make plinty more as soon as I git under way."

"You take care of your money, Tim," said Mr. Toddle, kindly. "Listen, while I briefly explain to you the calculation which Mr. Cockle and I have made; for we have not taken this step without due consideration. We find it will cost less to furnish and pay rent for your cottage, than it will to keep Christopher at the inn where he now is; to say nothing of the kind, careful attention which he will receive from you. Mr. Cockle has left me to arrange matters with you, as I know you better than he does; and I hope you will not object to act as I recommend you. I wish you to furnish your cottage comfortably,—I know you will not be extravagant,—and to keep an account of all your expenditure while Christopher is with you; and when he is able to get about, we will have a reckoning. You had better not think about 'getting under way,' as you call it, for the present; for I know that Mr. Cockle has something in view for you which will suit you very well; and in the mean time, you will have enough to do to attend to Christopher, and try to get him restored to health. I'm sure, Tim, you will look well after him," added Mr. Toddle, with earnestness. "You know the poor youth's peculiar weaknesses; and he will be influenced as much—or perhaps more—by you, than by any other person. I believe he is a good-natured lad at the bottom; and, by God's blessing, he may yet become an ornament to society; and I trust that the terrible ordeal through which he has passed may leave an impression on his mind which will never be effaced."

"I know the way to do things now, Sir, better nor I did a while agone. I'll tell yez all about the happy change as is come over me whin I gits time, Sir. I know now where to go to for help and direction whin I gits bothered at all; an shure I'll pray to God to help me to launch the young masther agin as tight as an oak-built ship fresh caulked."

"I am delighted to hear you speak in this way, Tim; and to see you so willing to try to save the poor youth. You know if a man falls overboard at sea, all hands will rush to the life-boat to try to save their drowning shipmate; and if Christians in general would only show the same activity in performing their duty, there would be fewer poor creatures walking the streets of this city with emaciated bodies, and souls ripening for everlasting ruin." Mr. Toddle then shook hands with his humble friends, and departed.

"What are you laughing at?" asked Sally, as Tim stood smiling and nodding his head, and fumbling the cheque in his fingers for several minutes after Mr. Toddle had bade them good bye.

"Why, my honey pot, I was jist then thiinkin ov a rum yarn whot Tom Tuff, the quartermaster, tould me onst about his messmate, Jim Vangs. Whisht, Sally, an I'll tell it yez, while that chap is measurin the China matting for yer bist parlour.

"Well, Jim woke up all ov a sudden one middle watch below, an began to swear; for he was an awful feller to curse—that was the worst ov him, an he didn't know how ugly it made him look. So Tom Tuff, who was lying in the nixt bunk, axed him what was the matter wid him, thinkin perhaps he'd caught a rat bitin his nose off, or some sich trifle. So Jim ups and tells him that he had bin havin a lovely drame, an had woke up just five minutes too soon. He dreamt that he had bin ashore to the Captain's house with a jar ov pickled ginger from Injer, whin the skipper's wife axed him iv he'd take a glass of grog. Ov coorse, he sed he wud; for Jim liked grog—a dale too much, poor feller, an that's why he'd ony bin a common sailor all his life. 'Will yez take it hot or cowl'd?' sed the Captain's wife. Jim sed he'd like it best bilin hot, for hot stuff tickled him longer nor cowl'd raw stuff did. 'I'll jist rin down to the kitchen for some hot wather,' sed the lady, an away she wint; but afore she came back agin Jim woke up, an was mighty savage wid himself bekase he didn't take the grog cowl'd; an that's what he was swearin about when Tom Tuff hailed him to know what was up.

"Now ye see, Sally," continued Tim, "I was pritty nigh lettin this cheque slip; for I didn't like to take it at all; an I shud have bin mighty vexed wid meself iv I'd let Mr. Toddle carry it away wid him, though I shudn't swear about it. I was forgittin for a minute that I am not single Tim Rafferty now, standin in me own shoes—as the sayin is—an now I come to think ov it it wudn't be fair play til ye, darlint, to broach yer money to save owld Alderman Cockle's dollar chest—not a bit ov it. Still an all, we'll be as careful as we can, an kape tally ov all as goes in or out as honestly as a mate's cargo book."

A fortnight afterwards Tim's cottage looked as "illigant as a first-class saloon"—to use his own simile—and Christopher had

recovered sufficiently to bear his removal to it in a cab. About the same time Phelim Rafferty returned from Cockleton, highly pleased with the farm, and in a few days more he and all his family were on their way up to take possession of it—with their hearts overflowing with joy and gratitude to God for the providential way in which He had led them.

CHAPTER XLVII.

NICHOLAS COCKLE'S Letter to his Brother Noah relative to Christopher and his Affairs in general, and explaining many little Matters of Importance and Interest.

It would be tedious to relate all the plans and expedients of Uncle Nicholas and Mr. Toddle for investigating Christopher's complicated affairs; or to describe the difficulties which beset their arduous undertaking. Suffice it to say, that they were untiring in their researches, and deserving of more success than they met with. After Christopher was sufficiently recovered to be questioned, they were to some extent aided by information they received from him; at the same time they avoided making him acquainted with their designs, as his mind was too enfeebled to bear the least excitement.

The result of their joint efforts for several weeks may be seen by a perusal of the following letter from Mr. Nicholas Cockle to his brother Noah.

“SYDNEY, *November* —, 1855.

“MY DEAR BROTHER,

“MY last letter will have informed you of the sad misadventures of poor Christopher, and the critical state of his health. I am now happy to be able to write you in a much more hopeful strain, for his physician has pronounced him out of danger, and he is progressing very favourably.

“A fortnight ago I removed him to a comfortable little cottage at Pymont, (a healthy suburb of Sydney,) and placed him under the care of your old servant Sally and her husband. Tim Rafferty is a thoroughly kind-hearted fellow, who, I am sure, has a sincere affection for Kit; so he is well cared for, and you need not give way to anxiety on that account. When he is well enough to travel, I have arranged for him to go to Cockleton for a short time; and after his health is re-established, a friend of mine—a merchant in Sydney—will take him into his office, and initiate him into the routine of mercantile life.

"I have no doubt Christopher will readily fall into my arrangements, for he seems very tractable; in fact, I may tell you, for your comfort, that he appears to be thoroughly penitent for his past follies and extravagances, and promises, if he regains his health, henceforward to show his gratitude to God for sparing his life, and his appreciation of the kindness and forbearance of his friends, by renouncing his old habits and vicious associates, and living a new life.

"I have met with a Mr. Toddle, who came out in the 'Calabash, and that gentleman has kindly assisted me in my troublesome investigation of Christopher's affairs.

"I am sorry to report very unfavourably, as far as pecuniary matters are concerned; but we must be thankful that the poor lad's body and soul have been saved, and be content to put up with monetary losses, which are of comparatively trifling importance. As I have before remarked, it was a sad error in judgment to send the boy here with an almost unlimited command of capital; but reflecting on it is of no practical use at present; and it is better to hope that the experience which he has so dearly purchased may have a salutary influence on his after life. I believe it will; for I cling to the idea, that there is latent talent in the lad, which the use of judicious means may develope, and that Christopher Cockle may yet become a light in this good land. I believe the poor boy is more to be pitied than blamed; for, in the course of my investigation, I have plainly seen that he has been the dupe of shrewd, unprincipled persons ever since he left home; and his inexperience and inherent good nature have made him an easy victim.

"His total liabilities are about £5,000. His assets are not so easily discovered; for he has kept no accounts, and I have not been able to question him very closely on the subject. Indeed, I do not think he could give me much information. It appears that he has left the management of his affairs to an agent, who has recently gone into the Insolvent Court; and from his notoriety for paying next to nothing on his previous purgations, I am not sanguine of getting much from his estate; and the bulk of Christopher's assets were in the hands of that accomplished schemer.

"I have made an arrangement with Christopher's creditors, which I trust you will approve of. At any rate, I would rather satisfy them at my own cost, than see a Cockle go up King Street, (as going through the Bankruptcy Court is called here).

I have made myself liable for £2,500, and have got a full discharge for Christopher. I leave you to send me the money, or any part of it you please; but if you do not send any, I shall not fall out with you about it. You have already expended a large sum, without being called upon for this additional heavy amount. I can sympathize with you; but I do hope that the heart of a Cockle will not grieve over an irremediable loss, which, after all, will not ruinously affect you.

“With reference to the scandalous charges against Christopher’s character, of which your last letter apprised me, I am happy to be able to report, that there is not the slightest foundation for one of them; in fact, I cannot discover that the boy has positively acted dishonestly in any way. He has simply been a tool and a fool for designing persons to work with; and he has fallen into the very common snare of hasting to be rich. I have seen all the gentlemen who have written to you, and have fully satisfied them of Christopher’s innocence; and they have expressed regret at having caused you unnecessary distress of mind. There is no doubt that those gentlemen have been victimized, though your son is innocent; and a few words will explain the disgraceful manœuvres.

“It appears that Christopher formed a too hasty acquaintance with an accomplished swindler named Slyver, (a convict expiree from Western Australia,) who possessed himself of the poor boy’s letters of introduction, under pretence of destroying them, as useless lumber; and while he was lying insensible at an hotel, from the effects of drugs which this villain had administered, he obtained possession of Christopher’s card case and a suit of his clothes, and personated him to those gentlemen to whom the letters of introduction were addressed; and the result you know. He also victimized Christopher by borrowing cheques, and altering the amounts, and by forging his name to forms which he had surreptitiously obtained from Christopher’s cheque-book. He has otherwise deceived and cheated the poor simple, confiding lad in various ways, which I have not patience to detail; and it is supposed that he has decamped to California.

“Another person named Shicer—whom I think you have seen—has also defrauded Christopher to the extent of £2,000. He has also absconded; but I have some hope of tracing his whereabouts, and of punishing him, though I do not expect to recover any of the money which he has so fraudulently obtained.

“The abandoned young woman, and her still more infamous aunt,—as she was termed,—whom I alluded to in my last letter, have also swindled Christopher to a serious extent; and I fear I can neither punish them nor recover a fraction of the money which they have cajoled from the unsuspecting youth. With much difficulty I recovered several of his boxes; but his outfit had been taken out of them, and they contained merely rubbish which had been substituted. In consequence of my inability to prove that the contents of the boxes were not changed while in the agent’s store, I cannot prosecute those depraved women for the flagrant fraud; in fact, I have been advised not to attempt it, for it would necessarily lead to an *exposé* which it is desirable to avoid. Annoying as the loss is, it is still a matter for rejoicing that it is not worse, and that the poor youth is not legally tied for life to an infamous woman; for I believe it was by mere accident that he discovered her true character only a few days before the time which had been fixed for his marriage with her: of which rash project I need not say that I was wholly ignorant.

“I will continue to advise you by every mail of Christopher’s progress; but I hope he will soon be able to write to you himself. I really think that you will have no cause in future for anxiety on his account; and I would earnestly plead on his behalf for your forgiveness. He has repeatedly expressed his willingness to go to work, and earn his own livelihood, as soon as his health will allow of his so doing; and I intend to put him to the test. The merchant to whom I previously alluded has promised to give him £100 a year, to begin with, and to increase his salary as he proves useful. I think that sum will be sufficient to support him in the economical way which I have planned, and which I will briefly explain to you.

“I have secured a situation for Tim Rafferty, as messenger to one of the club houses in Sydney, and he will enter upon his duties as soon as Christopher can dispense with his services. Tim will continue to occupy his cottage at Pymont, and Christopher will lodge with him. Rafferty is a shrewd, lively fellow, and withal a good Christian, and his wife is—but I need not describe her, you know her much better than I do. This I feel assured of, that they are both truly interested in the boy’s welfare, and will take more care of him than even you would do; so I strongly advise you not to alter this arrangement. At all events, let it stand for a time, until Christopher has given us convincing proofs of his thorough reformation.

"My good friend Mr Toddle (who is an experienced old colonist) has assisted me in all my plans, and he is as sanguine as I am that they will tend to the youth's permanent benefit. Again assuring you that I will do all that is necessary to be done for his comfort, I remain, my dear brother, with love to all your family,

"Yours affectionately,

"NICHOLAS COCKLE."

"To Alderman Cockle,
 "Turtlesell Lodge,
 "Tooting."

CHAPTER XLVIII.

CHRISTOPHER'S Convalescence. Tim Rafferty's Remarks on popular Preachers. Tim's religious Experience, and other interesting Matters. A brief Description of the most important Event in Christopher's History.

"SALLY, Sally! please to come, and put another pillow under my head."

"Yes, dear," said Sally, stepping lightly into a little chamber, wherein Christopher lay on a comfortable bed, with a snow white quilt and hangings, as tastily arranged as though his mother or sister had been there. "There, dear, that's better, isn't it?" she asked, as she gently raised the invalid's head, and placed an additional pillow under him.

"Thank you, Sally. That's very comfortable. Now I can see out of the window," said Christopher. "Tim is late this morning, isn't he, Sally? I wonder what is delaying him. It is nearly half-past one."

"He has gone into Sydney, to hear that great preacher who has just come out from England. He does not often leave his own church; for he says it isn't polite to the parson; but he was persuaded to go in with Mr. Rover, this morning, to hear this celebrated man, whom everybody is praising. He will soon be back, dear. Shall I bring in your dinner now?"

"No, thank you, Sally; I am not in a hurry for it. Throw the window wide open, please; I like the perfume from your flowers in the garden: it reminds me of home. I have not noticed flowers for a long time; and I used to be fond of them, you know, when I was a little boy. Don't you remember the two oval beds in the front garden at the Lodge, Sally, that Sophy and I used to call our own; and how vexed poor old Rakes used to be, because we would not allow him to trim them, and because we would grow sunflowers? Ha, ha, ha! Poor old Rakes! I am sorry I used to tease him. I think I am much better this morning. Don't you think so, Sally?"

"Yes, dear, I am sure you are ever so much better; but you mustn't talk too much. Now I'll go and take the dinner up. Tim won't be long, I am sure. I have made you one of your

favourite figgy puddings ; for I think you may begin to eat a little solid food now."

It was a bright, calm Sabbath day. The solemn stillness was broken only by the chirping of the *cicadæ* (or locusts) in the oak tree at the corner of the garden, and the hum of bees among the flowers. The waters of the harbour were sparkling with golden sunshine, and the flags on the masts of various vessels at anchor—which could be seen from Tim's cottage—were hanging motionless in the still air. All nature seemed at rest ; and a soul-soothing peace was inspired with the soft air of that clear spring morning. Christopher had been intently reading the Bible ;—which of late had become of increasing interest to him. He laid the book down, as his kind nurse left the room, and gazed upon the beauteous scenery outside ; and as he lay, with his thin hands clasped together, his mind wandered back to his old home, and his beloved friends afar off ; and a host of tender recollections was stirred up in his heart, which caused tears to flow down his emaciated face. Presently he heard the well-known footsteps of Tim entering the gate, and in another minute that faithful friend was by his bedside ; his honest face as usual garnished with good-humoured smiles.

"An how are ye now, honey ? Shure yez ought to be all alive O, this lovely morning. I think iv ye was to heave out ov that, for an hour or two, ye'd be all the better for it, as the dochter sed to the cook's mate, whin he coiled himself up behind the galley stove, to git rid of his lumbago. What do you say, Sally ? shall we rouse him out ontill the sofa ?"

"Not to-day, Tim, not to-day ; perhaps we may move him to-morrow. He is very weak, poor fellow ! and we must not try his strength too much. I think my beef-tea is doing him good ; I've got some more in the saucepan."

"How late you are, Tim !" softly exclaimed Christopher.

"Troth, I've had a long walk, darlint ; an I don't think I've got much by it nayther. I'll take good care niver to lave my own seat agin, for there's no luck in doin that same, as the cobbler sed whin he wint haymakin, an got tossed by a bull. It isn't fair play to me own parson, anyhow, to be scuddin afther strangers ; it's as good as tellin him I don't care much for what he's got to say ; an I don't think a feller gits much good by dodgin about like a bird in a cherry garden. Better for the likes o' me to steer a straight, steady course, than to be yawlin about to all points ov the compass, or backing and

fillin in an out ov all the new channels I may hear tell ov ; for it's likely enough I shud tail onto a sand-bank, or maybe hit me keel agin somethin harder nor that."

"Didn't you like this celebrated Mr. —a—What's-his-name?" asked Christopher.

"Shure, I cudn't be off likin him, honey ! unless I was a haythin out an out, for he's a rale good man, an I'll be bound ivery word he sed was as true as a hymn-book. Still an all, Sir, ye know monkeys like nuts better nor gems an jewels, an it's no good tryin to feed a hungry ship's crew on chicken broth an calf's-foot jelly,—not a bit ov it. Lobskonse an slush stuff ud suit em a dale better. To say nothin ov the Greek an Hebrew, his riverince payed out sich lots ov rich things, all ov a lump like, that my head got bothered altagether wid tryin to stow em away ; an so I've lost amost all ov the sarmint, an sorry enough I am, soh ; for ye like to hear me tell all I can recollect whin I come home from church."

"What was he preaching about, Tim?" asked Sally.

"Och, shure ! there ye'll bother me agin, jewel ; for I cudn't tell yez iv ye'd knock me head off, barrin the tixt, an I'll find you that by an by. As the jintleman was preachin away wid all his might, sometimes shouting out like Captain Toffey in a squall, an at other times spakin in tones as soft an solemn as your old musical clock, Sir, I was sittin jist behind a cast iron stanchion, thinkin about all sorts ov rum things, an I cudn't shtop meself a bit, though I knowed it was wicked. I fancied meself alongside ov a jetty, takin in a boat-load ov garden stuff for the voyage, same as I used to do awhile agone, whin I was steward's mate ; an I thought as how the chap in the cart was pitchin the stuff down ta me faster nor I cud stow it away. Fust an foremost, I fancied I was cotchin a bundle ov greens an a bunch ov carrots, thin a lovely pineapple or two, or a stalk ov bananas. Thin ud come a white-heart cabbage an a lock ov cauliflowers, thin a bushel ov thumpin red pertaties, starin at me wid all the eyes they'd got. Nixt ud come some ripe raspberries an a basket ov blackheart cherries. Whilst I was lickin me lips at thim, down ud come a rope ov inguns, a bundle ov rhubarb, an a peck ov marrow-fat peas. Afore I cud stow em all away nicely, I'd have a shower ov green gooseberries an red pepper pods on me head ; and while I was gittin me breath agin, a tunderin grate big iron-bark pumpkin wud come rattlin down, and make me jump. After that shock ud come a lot ov love apples, an maybe some ripe mellow pears, too ; and, last

ov all, a regular broadside ov sugar-melons to wind up wid."

"Fiddle ! fiddle ! Tim," said Sally, rather impatiently.

"Go an fiddle yerself, Sally ; but don't ye sthop me whin I'm spakin til a jintleman," retorted Tim, rather warmly. "Now, Sir, I'd like to know how cud any raysonable man stow all that stuff away widout takin breath, iv it was hove at him faster nor he cud cotch it ? It's onpossible, as the costermonger sed whin he was axed to carry a coroner an his jury in his donkey-cart. Shure, an that was jist the way wid the jintleman in the car—pulpit, I mane—this mornin, Sir. Ivery word he sed was good and wholesome ; troth, it was illigant ; but it was too rich for me ; too much spice in it, as Mr. Waggle sed of the Indian hotch-potch ; an the more I tried to cotch, the more I lost, till I got as bothered as an owld woman up in Ballywhack belfry on Queen's birthday.

"Och ! thinks I ta meself, as I slewed about on me seat, iv his riverince ud jist give a poor wake-headed mortal like meself ony half the variety ov good stuff, an take a little more time in handin it down aisily ta me, I cud have stowed it all away comfitably widout bein bothered a bit, an I cud have told you an Sally most all about it. Stead ov which, ye see I can ony jist tell yez that he was sich a wonderfully clever pracher that I cudn't understand him. Don't yez see the force ov my raysin, Sir ? Ony that it wud be too bould ov me, I'd jist like to call on his rivirence to-morrow mornin, an ax him allers to put a few plain sailing directions in his sarmints, in case any poor owld miserable sailor should be stowed away in a corner dying to know the bearings ov the Port of Salvation, an the straight course to steer in order to reach it. An shure iv there was one sich a customer there this mornin, he's gone away widout knowing a haporth about it, I'm 'feard.

"Anyhow," added Tim, rising, "I'll niver rin away from me own blissed parson again ; for iv he isn't so mighty larned as some ov thim collige-brid jintlemen are, I can understand all he says, so it's clear enough he suits me bist. Though, mind ye, Sir, I don't mane to say a word, nor yit half a word, against larnin ; not I, indeed ; an I ony wisht I'd got a little more ov it, as the boy sed whin he was stood in the corner wid a dunce's cap on. But I'm rale hungry, Sally, me girrl. Maybe I'll remimber somethin to tell the young masther afther I've had me dinner, an finished me shmoke.

"Now Barney an Norah," said Tim, as he seated himself at

the dinner-table, in an adjoining room, "let me tell yez somethin afore I forgot it. As I walked through Sydney to church this mornin, I seed no end ov fruit and lollypop shops open, and lots ov boys an girls spindin their coppers. Poor crathers, thinks I, maybe they don't know no better; but the folks as kapes the shops ought to have more respect for the day, or the Government ought to try to tache thim. I hope ye'll both ov yez kape in mind that it's wicked to trade or work on Sundays; an that ye'll allers 'remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy.' Won't yez, honies?"

"Yis, faathir:" "Yis, faathir," said Barney and Norah, cheerfully.

"Good boy! That's a good girrl! I know'd ye'd say, yis. Now say grace, Sally, iv ye please.".....

"I have been thinking a good deal about what you said to me last night, Tim," said Christopher, as Rafferty re-seated himself by the bedside, after he had finished his meal and his pipe. "I have been trying to find rest for my troubled mind, but I cannot get it, Tim; and I am so very, very unhappy, especially when I am by myself. O, I do wish I could get rid of my burden, as poor Christian did in that nice story of the 'Pilgrim's Progress,' which Sally read to me the other day," added Christopher, while his eyes filled with tears. "I want peace of mind, Tim."

"To be sure ye do, honey! an ye'll git it too; for I can show ye God's own blissed word for it, that 'them that seek Him shall find Him.' Didn't I show you that, this very mornin, afore I wint to church?"

"Yes, Tim, you did: but whenever I begin to read what God's word says, I feel such a horrible sense of my own wickedness and unworthiness, that I am ready to despair. O, Tim, I have been such a vile youth. I have broken nearly all God's laws; and I fear I shall be punished for ever in fire and brimstone."

"Ye've bin a very wicked bhoy, there's no mistake about that: still an all, iv ye wos the most out-an-out blaggird in the worl'd, God wud have mercy on yez, an forgive yez, iv ye ony axed Him in the right way. Ye belave God's word, don't ye? Shure it's ony fools an cranky fellers as say they doubt it. Ye belave that Bible ye have in yer hand, don't yer, honey?"

"O yes, Tim, I believe every word of it; and it's that which frightens me so; for the more I read of it, the more I feel con-

demned; and my heart is ready to break. I don't know what to do."

"Jist turn to Isaiah i. 18; and see iv that won't comfort yez," said Tim. "It was a rale comfiting text to me, whin I was as much in the dark as ye are now, Sir."

Christopher opened the book, and read the verse attentively; then, with an imploring look at Tim, he said, "I don't understand it, Tim. I cannot see how God can forgive such a wicked sinner as I, unless I do something to merit forgiveness. I am much more depraved than you think I am, Tim."

"Tut, don't tell me that, darlint. An iv ye are so, hasn't God forgiven me? An what had I to offer for my pardon more than the poorest beggar in the world? Shure I've bin tin times a bigger sinner nor ye have, jewel! But iv I'd bin a hundred million times worse nor I was, God wud have pardoned me for the sake ov His dear Son, who became surety for me, who died on the cross to pay my debts, to atone for *my* sins; an for the sins ov ivery poor sowl in the worrld beside,—lasteways, ov all thim who will accept of His suretyship; an ye can't do that unless ye belave on Him. Isn't that clear enough, Sir?"

"I can't understand it, Tim. I wish I could see it as plainly as you do."

"Look here, honey! I'll put it til yez in me own simple way, though I cudn't make it a bit plainer nor it is in God's word, iv I was to try all me lifetime. Ye remimber what yer uncle sed til yez the night afore last?"

"He said many kind things to me, Tim, more than I deserve. He told me that he would never mention my past misconduct, if I would be steady in future."

"He did so; an didn't he tell yez, too, that he had paid all thim snap-dragons as had got yer name on bits of paper, (though dear knows it's nothin at all ye owed any ov thim,) an that none ov thim cud put yez in chokee for debt, or ax ye for a penny-piece? He tould yez all that, for I heerd him say it; an I seed yer face brighten up in a minute like a new fardin. Ye was glad enough to hear that news, an ye belaved what yer uncle said widout thinkin twice about it. Isn't that true, honey?"

"O, yes, Tim, that is quite correct; and I feel grateful to dear uncle for all his goodness. Of course I cudn't doubt his word, for he showed me my written discharge from all liabilities."

"Well, thin, ye'll surely belave that God Almighty is better nor yer uncle; and iv ye'll search that book in yer hand, ye'll find God's promise of pardon for all yer wickedness, an His written discharge from all your liabilities; and, what's more, His promises of help and direction all the way through life's voyage, and free pilotage inta the port of heaven at last. Jesus Christ paid your debt against God's laws whin He died on the cross; and iv ye'll ony just trust in what He did for yez, ye may rist as sartin ov the forgiveness and favour of God, as I am myself.

"Whisht, an I'll tell yez a small bit ov my experiance. Cheer up, honey, and don't cry; for shure, iv such a poor, ignorant, drunken, swearin owld sailor as I cud gain God's love, an find the way to heaven, ye naydn't fear not a bit. Troth, there's not a mortal bein in the worrld wud fear ov findin it; an the way is so simple an aisy, and so plisant too, that I wondher in me heart why iverybody alive doesn't find it out an be happy. Listen to me thin, Sir, and I'll make me yarn as short as I can.

"You know I was an awful rollickin rascal whin ye fust joined the 'Calabash.' I didn't fear God, nor the devil naythir; an I was allers up to me ears in trouble and bother ov one sort or another. Wel, I used to hear his riverince, Mr. Racey, ivery Sunday, and that's what fust roused me; for I'd niver heerd such sinsible prachin afore. I récollect hearin him prache about the prodigal son, an I felt awfully touched up wid it. Still and all, I didn't feel very long; for I used to go til me panthry, and take a lot ov grog whiniver I felt me conscience oneasy, and that's the way I smothered me convictions many a time. Be the same token, that's the very way lots ov poor mortals are doin ivery day in the week; an a sorrowful reckonin they'll have by an by, iv they don't stop in time. You know whin I guv up grog intirely, Sir, and from that blissed minute I haven't touched a smell ov it. Troth, it was a lucky day for me whin I did that same. I don't mane to say that teetotalism saved me sowl,—not at all, Sir; but it helped to kape me brain steady; and thin I began to think seriously, and that's more nor I iver did afore; for I allers got dhrunk whin I began to think, and thin in course good thoughts all flew away out ov me head, an the devil put bad uns in instead.

"You know, Sir, the 'Calabash' made the passage home 'west about,' an we fell in wid some bad weather. One time I thought it was all up wid us, an I was mightily scared, though I had seen many worse blows at sea afore, and niver felt afear'd.

Cos why? It was allers happy-go-lucky wid me thin, an I niver used to think a bit about what wud become ov me afther I was dead. At anithir time there was a terrible accident on board. One poor fellow belongin to the engine-room got awfully smashed up wid the machinery. That scared me too; 'and,' thinks I to meself, 'iv I shud be walked off all ov a sudden, what wud become ov me at all.' Thin somethin inside ov me tould me I'd go straight to hell, and sarve me right, too. So I began to cry to God in airnest; an for a week or more, I was as miserable as a feller who is goin to be cooked an eaten up by cannibals. I didn't know how to pray exactly: an I used to sit up at night and read the Bible, as you have been doin, Sir; but I couldn't see a spark ov comfit anywhere, bekase I didn't understand it.

"Last ov all, I recollected that I had heerd tell ov a poor marine, who was in mighty great trouble like meself. He had niver prayed in his life, and he didn't know what to say at all. All at onst, he fell down on his knees, an held his hands up, an cried out, 'Quarters, Lord! quarters, Lord!' He kept on singing out like that till the Lord answered him, an filled his heart full ov joy. So one night I locked meself in me panthry, an fell down on me knees, an cried out, like the marine, 'Quarters, Lord! quarters, Lord! Hear a poor wicked ould sailor, Lord. I'm downright ashamed ov meself, and I'm miserable. Have mercy on me, good Lord, for Jesus Christ's sake. Pray help me. Save me, or I shall go straight to the devil! Quarters, Lord! quarters!'

"How long I was on my knees, singin like that, I don't know; but I think it was all through the middle watch. I didn't feel a bit ov comfit, but I think I got worse; so I opened me Bible agin, and thin I saw the words of Jesus in John xiv. 14. So I ses to myself, 'This is God's own word, and I know it's true. I'll ax Him to save me *now*; and I'll cry out till He does save me.' So I goes on my knees agin, and I ses, 'O blessed God, this is Thy word that I hold in my hand: here it ses, 'If ye ask anything in My name, I will do it.' I ask pardon for all my sins, in the name of Jesus. I believe Thou can save me *now*, Lord; I believe Thou wilt do it *now*, Lord.'

"Shure enough, Sir, as I sed them last words, I felt a load tumble off my conscience like a ton ov coals, an I was ready to fly. I niver shall forgit how happy I felt. I began to sing, 'O be joyful,' an woke up the second mate, who thought I was cranky at fust; but I pritty soon tould him what was the matter

wid me, an I think he began to cry for quarters too. From that blessed minute I have felt sartin ov God's forgiveness, and sure ov heaven. I've niver bin ashamed nor afeard to tell the story to my shipmates: an though some ov thim laughed at me, others ov thim set to worrk in the same simple, airnest way as I did; an ivery one as did so got as happy as meself.

"But the devil has many a time bin tryin to coax me back agin; for he didn't like to lose sich a handy chap as I was in his sarvice. He's oftin whispered in me ear, that I've bin de-saveng meself all along, an that I hadn't bin pardoned at all. But I allers turn my back til him, and rin to me Bible; and there are thousands ov tixts to comfit and guide a poor feller, an they enable me to triumph over the devil and all his timplations. Och, Misther Cockle, it's a rale blissed thing to have the love ov God in yer heart; an shure I wudn't give up the happiness it brings til me for the 'Calabash' full ov Koh-i-noors. An there's not a bit ov rayson why you shudn't be as happy as I this very minute, Sir."

"O, leave me for a little, Tim, if you please," sobbed Christopher, with his hands covering his face. "I am so distressed, I cannot hear you any more."

"Yis, darlint! I'll lave yez directly in a minute; but hear me say jist half a word more fusht. Suppose ye was in gaol, goin to be hanged to-morrow, and the governor was to sind a missinger wid yer written pardin in his hand, wud yez cover yer eyes an frit? Not ye, indeed! Ye'd read the pardin, an ye'd jump for joy, and scud out ov the prisin quick enough, I'll ingage. Now I'm goin, honey!" said Tim, laying the open Bible down on the bed. "Here's your pardin, written in forty places, an more nor that. *Read it, believe it, an be joyful!* That's all I've got to say, Sir.".....

"Whisht, Sally! what's that?" asked Tim, starting up from a sound sleep about an hour after midnight. "Och, glory be to God! it's the young mather singin, so it is!"

In another minute, Tim was beside Christopher's bed, singing and crying alternately, and shouting praises to God. Like the Philippian gaoler, Christopher Cockle believed on the Lord Jesus Christ, and he was saved.

CHAPTER XLIX.

DESCRIBES a "merry Christmas Day," at Phelim Rafferty's House at Cockleton. Meeting of Friends. Speeches of Tim Rafferty and Christopher at the Dinner Table. Christmas Salute to Squire Cockle and his Family at Cockleorum Hall. Also describes Phelim's Farm and Homestead.

It was a merry Christmas morning. The sun was pouring down his meridian beams on a broiling land, and everybody was perspiring. A sultry wind stirred the drooping foliage of the trees in Phelim Rafferty's orchard, and made the green fruit begin to blush, and the ripe fruit to fall exhausted. Numberless bright-winged birds whistled among the branches of the red plum-trees, and pecked at the primest of the fruit,—as birds usually do; but no one attempted to scare them away, for it was not a day to grudge any mouth a meal,—at least, so thought Phelim, who was sitting in a snug little parlour of his new homestead at Cockleton, studying his next Sunday's sermon. His buxom wife and blooming daughters were busy in the back kitchen, preparing Christmas dinner; and ever and anon expressing their grateful admiration of "the galores of food which bothered thim intirely to find pots and kettles enow to cook it all." Phelim's boys, (who, by the way, were full-whiskered men,) dressed in their Sunday clothes, were lolling on a rough bench in the front verandah, chatting pleasantly upon various subjects, foremost of which was "the mighty great difference between Christmas weather in the ould counthry, and this new un;" and speculating on the use of mosquitoes, soldier ants, and blow-flies, which were to be seen in multitudes.

"Bedad, Mike! wudn't ye like a hatful ov snowballs this blazin morning?" said Dan, the eldest of the boys, to his second brother. "An wudn't it make sisther Nelly jump, iv we wos to heave one through the kitchen windee intil her car, jist now? ha! ha!"

"Faix, thin I don't care a tater-skin iv I niver touch show-balls agin, not I. Many's the time I've wished there wasn't a haporth ov snow in the worrld at all, whin I've been workin all

day long up til me knees in it wid leaky brogans on, an me nose as blue as a musket bullet. Shure a hatful ov ripe peaches ull please me a mortal dale betther nor snowballs, an I can go and git em in a minute, widout payin a fardin for em."

Mike thereupon arose, walked into the orchard behind, and soon returned with his hat piled up full of prime ripe "slip-stones," which the three brothers began to eat with a zest peculiar to "new chums," who usually show special favour to that most abundant of Australia's rich fruits.

"Whisht, bhoys! hear thim what-do-ye-call-ems in the bush yinder! An didn't the folks at home tell us that all the birds in this counthry wor as mute as dead frogs, and wudn't sing a bit? That's a mishtake anyhow, for thim's lovely singin birds, when ye'r not too close til em," said Pat, pausing, with a peach in his mouth, to listen to a flock of magpies, which had perched upon a gum tree in the flat below, and were filling the air with their wild melody. "Why, the land is full ov music, so it is. What wid the birds, an bees, and locustes, forbye the frogs in the swamps, dashed iv I iver heerd the like of it at Christmas time afore, nor at any other time nayther."

"I'd like to have a crack at some ov the wild ducks in the lagoon beyont," said Dan: "ony that faather doesn't like us to shoot anythin on Christmas day, I'd go and git a dozen or so afore dinner time. Be the hoky thin this is a grand counthry for game, and no mishtake. An the bisht ov it is, a feller naydn't say 'By yer lave' to nobody, but jist take his gun an knock down as much as he can hit, for ony the price ov the powther an shot. Shure it was a rale lark I had at 'possum shootin tother night wid Jack Stump an his brother Joe. I belave I'll soon have skins enow to make a cloak to send home to ould daddy Flannigin."

"Och, crikey! I wondher what in the worl'd Uncle Tim ull say ov the young kangaroo, or Paddy-melon, as they call it, what we've got for dinner to-day. He niver seed one afore, I'll ingage. An won't he look sivin times at the crather's long tail poking out over the dish, like a roasted parsnip. Ha, ha, ha!"

"May be he'll think it's an ould monkey," said Pat; whereupon they all laughed together, till the birds in the bush began to answer them.

"Poo-o-gh! patience me, ain't it a rale roastin day?" remarked Mrs. Rafferty, as she seated herself on a stool by the

kitchen door, after she had given the Christmas pudding another stir with a stick, lest it should stick to the bottom of the boiler.

"Shure thin it's warrm, an nobody can say it isn't; but I'd raythir be over warrm thin over cowl'd, mother dear. Yez won't git ony rheumatiz in this fine sunshiny counthry, I'm hopin," said blue-eyed Nelly. Then she remarked to her sister beside her: "An doesn't it seem murther to put these lovely nectarines intil a pie, Peggy? Shure we'd ha rin a mile any day, widout brogans, ony jist to git a sight ov sich a dishful ov illigant fruit, so we wud. Well, well, this is a rale fine counthry shure enough, an bates all I heerd tell ov it. Don't I wish Norah Boyle an her sither were here, poor crathers! I'm afeard it's little enow they'll git to ate this blissed Christmas day, forbye taters an herrins; an dear knows they are stitching their heart-strings away, from mornin till night, to arn sixpince a day."

"O my! an I wisht Widee Bryan cud see our lovely little farm, an this grand house ov ours; how plaised she wud be, poor soul! An shudn't I jist like to sind her a bushel or two ov the ripe fruit, whot is lyin down rottin under the trees: how her hungry gossoons ud jump at em! An poor mortials, how they'd relish a bucketful ov the milk whot we'll be givin to the pigs by and by," said Mrs. Rafferty, with a sigh. "How's the goose gittin on, Molly, darlint? Kape a good fire on top ov the oven, for we've got lashins ov firewood for nothin, that's another blissed good thing, thank God!"

"I wondher what time Uncle Tim an Aunt Sally will be here, an the young jintleman wid em," said Peggy, who was arranging a large bouquet of bush flowers, which she had gathered that morning before the dew was off them.

"They'll not be long now, I'm thinkin," replied her mother, "so I'd betther go an pit on me bist cap an me new gown, or yer faathir will be gittin fidgitty; for he doesn't like to see us all thinkin so much about what we're goin to ate."

A short time afterwards there was a hearty shout raised by the boys in the verandah, which caused Phelim to close his book, and his wife and daughters to run to the front of the house, and soon they were all uniting in a laughing chorus; for jogging along the rough road leading to the farm was Uncle Tim in a cart, with Sally and Christopher beside him. Tim had a rein in each hand, and was guiding the horse by the "lifts and braces," as he called them; and as it was "the fisht time he had

iver steered a carrt, he was mortally afeard ov capsizin it." Presently he drew up in front of the house, and alighted with his passengers, amid loud shouts of welcome from his warm-hearted relatives, which made the horse prick up his ears in wonder.

While Tim is exchanging the compliments of the season with his smiling friends, and formally introducing Christopher to them ; and while Sally is taking off her bonnet, and putting on her new cap ; we will take a cursory glance at Phelim's new farm.

It comprised about fifty acres of rich brush land, and about an equal quantity of bush, or grazing land. The farm—as I before stated—had been occupied by an idle, intemperate man, consequently it had been neglected. Fences were out of repair, drains were defective, some of the land was over-run with weeds and couch grass ; and a person of less resolution and industry than Phelim would have hesitated to rent it at any price. But Phelim was a thorough farmer, and he saw at a glance that, with the aid of his strong boys, he would soon have it in working order ; for the land was good, though it had been badly used, having been constantly made to yield two crops of corn, or a crop of wheat and a crop of corn, each year, with mere surface ploughing, while the use of manure was never even thought of.

Uncle Nicholas was very anxious to secure Phelim for a tenant, so he offered the farm on easy terms ; moreover, he promised a loan of a team of working bullocks and half a dozen cows for a time : so a bargain was soon completed. He also introduced Phelim to a storekeeper at Kickadingo, who willingly agreed to supply him with what stores he needed till he got his first crop off. Although the family had only been on the farm a few weeks, their industry and good management were apparent, especially on the fences and drains, and both landlord and tenant were pleased with their contract.

The house was a roomy wooden building, and that, too, was in a sadly dilapidated condition when they entered it ; but under the magical influence of Mrs. Rafferty and her two active daughters it speedily underwent a thorough transformation, and on that festive day it looked—as Sally remarked—"like a little palace." The newly-whitewashed walls, both inside and out, were decorated with sprigs of forest-apple tree, and other Australian Christmas bushes ; and every preparation had been made

to welcome the friends who had just arrived to spend a happy Christmas with them.

There were numerous outbuildings detached from the homestead, all in a sad state of disrepair; but Phelim remarked to Tim, as they walked out to view the premises, "Wait till nixt Christmas, honey! thin iv ye'll come up ye shall see the whole consarn lookin in betther trim, I'll ingage. It's a lovely farrm, Tim, as iver I'd wish to work, but it hasn't had fair play at all. Plaise God to spare us all, we'll soon pay ye ivery hapenny we owe yez, an make a little fortin beside.".....

Christopher—whose health was much improved—had arrived at Cockleorum Hall three days before, under the escort of his kind friends Tim and Sally. He had received a most cordial welcome from his relatives, who vied with each other in making him comfortable. Not a word was said about past unhappy occurrences; and Christopher soon felt much more at ease than he had ever felt before. They were all very anxious that he should spend Christmas Day with them, but as Tim had previously expressed a great desire that Christopher should honour Phelim with his company to dinner on that day, his relatives did not further press their claim, lest they should pain poor Tim, to whom they all felt much indebted.

Christopher's altered mien had strongly impressed his friends at the Hall. He had entirely lost the consequential swagger and the noisy garrulity which had before made his company so disagreeable; in fact, they all declared that the alteration in him was marvellous. Kate said she quite liked him now, and Polly was almost making the same admission. Tom could hardly believe such a change was possible; and even old Alick, the coachman, remarked, in the servants' hall, that "the laddie was nae like the same ane who had smoked a wee black cutty all the way to Kickadingo, an shocked him wi sic a lot o' unco wicked stories aboot knockin doon constables, stealing door-knockers, an sic like daft doings, which young saft-headed birkies ca' the deil's delight.".....

While Phelim was showing Tim the wonders out of doors, Mrs. Rafferty was showing Sally all her little household comforts and conveniences inside, and expatiating upon them with all the eloquence which was inspired by the first possession of such luxuries.

"An did yez iver see the like o' this afore in a poor man's house, Sally?" asked Mrs. Rafferty, throwing open her store closet, and displaying groceries enough to stock a little shop.

"We got all thim up from Kickadingo last week. Ony think, honey! half a chest ov lovely tay, an a big bag ov sugar, a little box ov plums, a paper ov starch, a bag o' rice, an no ind ov things besides. Och me! I shud niver have thought ov it at all; an we don't desarve sich luck, that's a fact. This is a land ov plinty shure enough, an I hope we'll all be grateful to God for bringin us here alive an hearty. Troth, I wish I cud sind some ov these good things home til me poor owld neighbours, who are half starvin; or I wisht I cud fitch a lot ov em out here, so I do; an that ud be bettther still."

Dinner was announced in due course, and a rare repast it was. "A rale Christmas dinner," as Phelim remarked; "sich as he'd niver seed on his table afore; an be the same token he believed he was the fisht in his family who had iver sat down to the same board wid an Alderman's son, an he felt mighty plaised an honoured."

After he had reverently said grace he began to cut away at a sucking pig, while his wife carved a goose, and his son Dan a dish of wild ducks. Tim carved the young kangaroo, while Sally was honoured by having an immense parrot-pie placed before her. Of course they had vegetables in abundance from their own garden, including a thumping big dish of "real murphies," boiled in their jackets. The next course consisted of an enormous plum-pudding, with a sprig of green wattle sticking in it, and numerous dainty dishes besides; and on a side-table was a rich display of fruit from their own garden, including a water-melon as big as a little churn,—to use Nelly's figure. On the middle of the table was a large bouquet of beautiful flowers, which Alick had brought over from the Hall that morning, as a present from Miss Kate to Mistress Timothy Rafferty; at which mark of attention Tim was not a little flattered.

Many a time during the dinner did Phelim and his wife express a wish that they could send a "good thumpin slice ov plum-puddin to Widee Bryan's gossoons, or a goose's leg, or the pig's head, to poor owld blind Paddy Blake, or a pound ov tay out of the chist to Misther O'Whackem, the schoolmasher at Boggleton." There was plenty of fun too at that social board. Tim's ready wit kept a constant smile on every face; and each heart was merry.

When they had finished dinner, (without waiting for the ceremony of removing the cloth,) Phelim's face suddenly grew

serious, and after coughing two or three times, he rose from his seat, and said, "Dear friends! ye see we've nothin on our table stronger nor tay or milk, an I hope there niver will be on a table belongin to any of us. Shure I don't see why we shud injure our own health by dhrinkin our friends' health in sthrong stuff, as the fashion is, an maybe make fools of ourselves, to say nothin of wastin our money. Pass yer cups up, friends, an Nelly ull fill em wid good tay wid plenty ov milk in it; or if yez like wather bist, fill yer pannikins, an I'll give ye a toast that ye'll all dhrink right heartily, I'm sure." Then in rather a husky voice, and with moistened eyes, Phelim said, "Here's to our absent friends; an may God bless em."

As Christopher responded to the sentiment, his eyes filled with tears, Tim's face twitched, while Sally sobbed aloud.

"Dear Frinds!" continued Phelim, after he had coughed down some of his emotion. "By the blissing of God we've come here safe and sound. Here I mane to stay till I die; an I hope I'll kape the same mind as I have now, an thin I shall do all I can to binefit this good land an iverybody in it, lasteways as many on em as I can. I love iverybody, that's a fact, thof I can't spake all I feel." Then, grasping his brother's hand, while tears rolled down his cheeks, he added in faltering accents, "Arrah, Tim darlint! long life ta yer, me bhoy! may God bliss ye, an all belongin ta yez. Ye've bin a rale noble brother ta me, shure enow. Ony for ye I shud be workin meself to death for ony jist a bare livin in the owld land beyont; an dear knows what ud become of the bhoys an girls by an by, for they wudn't be let the farm afther I wos dead an gone. Shure I wisht ivery brother in this land, who can afford it, ud do as ye have done, Tim, me jewel, an help their poor relations out ov their poverty. It was a rale ginerous trick of yez, Tim, to pay for all our passages, afore we axed yez to do it. God ull bless ye for it, Tim, I'm sartin shure ov that."

Phelim would doubtless have said much more in the gratitude of his heart, but Tim stopped him by rising and saying, "Aisy, jewel! Don't say any more about that, an good luck ta yez. I cud answer a feller iv he was to give me a tap on the head wid a handspike better nor I cud whin I'm talked to in that soft style. I've ony done my duty, honey! as the soldier said to the Rooshun Ginerol, when he poked him through wid a bayonet. Sit down, Phelim, me bhoy, an let me make a spache. Frinds, this is the fisht Christmas day we have sane in the colony, an I hope it won't be the last by a score or two, plaise God.

We've all come here to advance Australy; it wants somebody to do it, that's plain enow; an I mane to say as how we're the very bhoys an girrls for the job, soh. I'm out an out plaised to see yez all so happy, an shure it ull warrm me heart all the days ov me life to think that I had a hand in helpin yez out of the bog of poverty, an puttin yez ont a sich solid ground as this.

"Frinds, I'd like well enow to sit down on a snug little farrm, an see me crops growin while I'm asleep; but it wudn't do for iverybody in the world to be farmers, that's sartin, an I must go on another tack, though I shan't have such a quiet life ov it. Ye know, frinds, I've travelled above a bit, up and down the world, an have picked up a hape ov exparience, iv I haven't picked up much money. I've bin among men ov all colours an all characters, an have heerd all sorts ov things talked about, whin perhaps people thought I was doin nothin but lookin afther me plates and dishes. I mane to turn my exparience inta sovereigns by and by. Shure I'll make it sell, as the nasty feller said, whin he boiled the dead cow inta mushroom ketchup. I shall soon be in the very identical sitiuation where I'll git shined up like a brass binnacle top, an where I'll pick up lots of colonial wisdom in no time, an finish me studies, as the sayin is. I'm goin into a refined circle in Sydney, frinds, an no mistake: there's no cow hides nor wooden nutmegs about the jintlemen as I shall mix wid, I can tell yez. I shall be a mumber of one of the tip-top clubs, lasteways I shall be mes-singer there the fisht go off; but it's pritty much the same thing; an my worrd for it, I'll soon mount above the area railings, an iv I dont get into the main top, as the saying is, I'll get as far up the riggin as I can, you may depend on it, in an honest way, ov course. I'm goin prentice, as it were, to learn to be a jintleman; an iv owld Paddy Rooney's son got transmogrified inta a squire in less nor twinty years, why shudn't I, I'd like to know? Troth I wudn't wondher iv yez see me a Mumber ov Parliament one of these days. Anyhow, I'm goin to improve me manners as fast as I can, an that ull give me somethin to do for a bit; besides, I'm goin to take care ov this young jintleman, as I promised his darlint father an mither I'd do. He's ingaged to tache me at nights all he larned at school, while I tache him some things what I've larned out ov school; an I shudn't wondher iv I'm a rale scholar by an by, as Billy Goof sed, whin he begun to larn all Parson Grant's ould sarmonts.

"Now, me frinds," added Tim, "I wish ye all a happy Christmas. May we all begin the new year in rale airnest; an

may God bliss us all, an help us to help anybody who wants any help. Afore I sit down, I'm goin to give yez somethin that ye'll all drink like one o'clock, as the purser sed to the sailors whin he piped to grog. It's the health ov me darlint young frind alongside ov me. It isn't right to spake ov a man afore his face nor behind his back : ony for that same I cud spake till I'd got no wind lift at all, an thin not say all I'd got to say about him. This much I can say, anyhow, an ye'll all be glad enough to hear it, that he's on the right tack now, an iv ye'll ony wait a bit, frinds, ye'll see what yer eyes ull show yer. I mustn't tell yez all he's promised me to do, but there's not a bit ov fear he'll steer a steady course in future. He's goin to begin to study like a young parson ; an iv he doesn't make the divil himself ashamed ov some ov his dhirty tricks, it won't be for want of touchin up, take my worrd for it. Here's the good health of Misther Christopher Cockle, Esq. ; an may he live to see as many ov his ancestors,—his posterity, I mane,—in this blissed land, as ud fill the 'Calabash' chock fore an aft."

Tim's speech was enthusiastically applauded, and the cups and pannikins were drained in honour of the young guest. Sally's honest eyes twinkled with delight ; and she whispered to Mrs. Phelim, that she only wished her old mistress could peep in at the window that very minute ; how overjoyed she would be to see her dear boy looking so well and happy !

Christopher blushed, and hesitated for some time ; then, with tearful eyes, he arose and said, in a mild but tremulous voice, "My kind friends, I cannot express how much I appreciate this mark of your esteem and good will ; at the same time, I am conscious that I am undeserving of it. I shudder to revert to my past sad career in the colony ; but I here express my deep sense of God's mercy in sparing my life, in pardoning my wickedness, and in giving me peace of mind such as I never before experienced. Friends, I have no confidence at all in my own weak will, but I know now where to go for help at all times ; and in the strength which I know God will give me, I solemnly promise before you all that I will henceforward live a 'godly, righteous, and sober life.' And I trust my future example may have a beneficial influence on many youths of this good land of my adoption."

Then, taking Tim's hand, Christopher sobbingly added, "To you, my trusty friend, I owe more than I can"—Here his voice failed him, and he burst into tears, and sat

down, while the loud sobbing of the whole company attested the warmth of their sympathy. Presently Phelim, in a loud, musical voice, struck up the Doxology, whereupon they all arose; and the adjacent woods resounded with their united voices, singing,

“Praise God, from whom all blessings flow.”

There are some persons in the world who fancy that Christians cannot be merry; but it is a great mistake. Indeed, they are the only persons who have real cause for expressing joy and gladness. What lots of innocent fun there was in Phelim's house on that merry Christmas night! What roars of laughter Tim's comical sea stories created! Never was seen a happier group in the land.

In the course of the evening, two of their next neighbour's sons, Jack and Joe Stump, dropped in to ask the boys to go kangaroo-hunting next day, and they were invited to stay and join the festive party. After a little close observation, Tim slyly whispered to his brother that he had heard “as how Australy was a wonderful place for young girls alterring their condition soon afther they arrived here: an he wudn't mind bettin a penny that Nelly an Peggy ud be turned into *Stumps* afore they ate two more Christmas puddins.”.....

Towards midnight the horse was put in the cart, and Tim prepared to return, with his passengers, to the Hall; but their kind friends would insist on escorting them thither. So Dan drove the cart; and Mike and Pat carried a lantern on each side. Phelim, with his wife and girls, rode in the cart, while the young Stumps followed in the rear. The cavalcade drove up the avenue to the Hall, singing a Christmas carol; and when the cart stopped at the front door, they all joined in three hearty cheers for Squire Cockle. The whole family came out at the unexpected salute, and after shaking hands all round, they wished their new tenants a *Happy New Year*. In that good wish I am sure my readers will cordially join.

CHAPTER L.

BOXING DAY in Australia. Christopher's Penitential Letter to his Parents. New Year's Day in Sydney. Tim Rafferty's jubilant Happiness. Christopher enters upon his Duties as junior Clerk in Messrs. Black, Ball, and Co.'s Office, and Tina is inaugurated as Messenger at the — Club. Concluding Remarks.

BOXING DAY was enlivened with the usual Christmas-tide festivities at Cockleorum Hall; each homestead on the Cockleton estate was full of "good cheer," and every heart was merry.

Old English seasonable pastimes were freely indulged in, and mirth and revelry abounded; but Squire Cockle very wisely set his face against jumping in sacks, smock races, climbing greasy poles, and such-like absurdities, which are sometimes miscalled "Old English sports:" and although there were performances of that sort to be seen at the "Blue Pig," on the river bank, very few, if any, of the Cockleton tenantry took part in them; for they were, on the whole, a sensible community.

Christopher passed a very pleasant day with his cousins and several young friends who had been invited for the occasion; and that night he retired to his couch, wearied with his unusual exercise, but with his head entirely free from that alcoholic bemuddlement which he had so often experienced after a day's frolic; and next morning he arose with his brain clear, his nerves firm, and his whole system invigorated by the healthful recreation he had indulged in, and with his mind entirely free from the old self-recrimination, which had so often embittered his early morning hours: for, while joining in the previous day's festivities, he had been "merry and wise."

Before leaving his chamber, he devoted a short time—according to his newly-formed plan—to meditation and reading the Scriptures: then, on his knees he prayed for Divine aid and guidance through the day, for strength for the day's duties, and for its trials, but especially for grace to enable him to resist those evil besetments which had formerly enslaved him. When he rose from his knees, his heart felt strengthened, and he descended to the breakfast-parlour with his face beaming with joy and gladness.

That afternoon he had a lengthy interview with his uncle and aunt in the library. I need not relate all their kind words of approbation and encouragement, nor all the judicious counsel they gave him. At the conclusion of the interview, the fond old pair kissed him affectionately, while tears of joy filled their eyes, at receiving his solemn assurance that henceforward he would walk "in the fear of the Lord."

Christopher then retired to his chamber, and, after a little meditation, sat down and wrote the following letter to his father and mother :—

"COCKLEORUM HALL, *December 27th*, 1855.

"HONOURED PARENTS,

"It is with mingled feelings of joy and grief that I take my pen in hand to address you after my long neglect of that duty.

"My letter will be brief; but the communication which you will receive by same mail from my dear uncle and aunt, will, I hope, assure you of the truthfulness of this epistle. I will not revert to past deplorable events, further than to say that I most sincerely repent of them. I confess that I have been a prodigal son, and am utterly unworthy of such tender, loving parents as I possess. But I am heartily sorry for my past grievous misconduct, and I humbly seek your forgiveness. Dear father and mother, pray forgive me, and do write me as soon as you receive this, and let me know that I have your pardon: then I shall be happy.

"Dear parents, I do not ask for further pecuniary assistance from you;—pardon me for saying that I would not accept of it from any one, for I intend to work, and earn my own livelihood in future. Dear uncle has got me a good situation at a salary of £100 a year; and Tim Rafferty has agreed to keep me for £70 a year; so I shall have £30 a year left for clothes and anything else I want; which will be ample, for I intend to be very economical. Uncle says that after the first year, if I suit my employer, he will give me an advance of salary; and I am sure I will try my utmost to deserve it. I mean to devote myself diligently to my duties, to learn all I can, and I hope and trust to prove to you very soon that I have some ability:—at any rate you shall hear that I am industrious and steady.

"I am going to Sydney with Tim and Sally to-morrow, and with the new year I shall enter on my duties, and I hope I

shall begin a new life altogether. I mean to join a church in Sydney, and shall also connect myself with a 'Young Men's Mutual Improvement Society,'—there are several in Sydney. There is also an excellent institution called the 'School of Arts;' and uncle has written to one of the officers of it, proposing me as a member. I dare say they will accept me, when they know that I am steady, and desirous of improving myself. There is a large library connected with that institution, and I intend to make good use of it; for my reading has hitherto been confined to stupid 'love and ghost stories,' and such like nonsense, which has of course done me harm. Uncle has given me a list of books which I have promised him to read carefully, if I am spared through the incoming year.

"I cannot express how much I feel indebted to dear uncle and aunt and cousins, for all their kindness to me; and how much I regret that I have so shamefully misrepresented them in my previous letters. I have been insane; that is the only explanation I can give for my base scandals: but thank God I am now restored to my right mind, and with the help which I know God will supply me, I will henceforward show my gratitude for the kindness and forbearance of all my good friends, by my consistent walk and conduct.

"Tim Rafferty and Sally have also been exceedingly kind to me; indeed, it is to their careful attention that I am indebted for my speedy restoration to health. They are both sincere Christians; and I owe my present happiness and future hopes to their instrumentality. I trust I shall ever strive to repay their warm attachment to me. Through uncle's influence Tim has got a good situation in Sydney. He is anxious to improve his very limited education, so I have promised to devote an hour every evening to teaching him; and as he is a man of good natural abilities, and wonderfully quick at learning anything, I think I shall have much pleasure in performing the duty of schoolmaster, and that Tim will do credit to my teaching. He says he is resolved to rise in the world, and he intends that I shall do the same. I would not boast of my future plans, but I will own that I have a humble desire to be useful, and to retrieve my past misspent time as far as I can; and I do sincerely hope that my example may influence some of the unsteady youths in the city, and induce them to forsake habits which are fast leading them to ruin.

"I very much regret that I sent those disgracefully exagge-

rated statements of colonial affairs to Cousin Solomon. If he has published them, I hope he will do all he can to counteract the mischief they may cause. I now confess that my opinions were formed upon a mere glance at the surface of things; and without taking the trouble to ascertain if my deductions were correct or not. Moreover, I was seldom in a condition to judge clearly upon any matter, however simple; for my brain was always more or less beclouded with drink, which, with shame and grief I confess, has been the blighting cause of all my misery and misdoing.

"But, dear father and mother, I have thoroughly renounced the dangerous habit; and I here solemnly promise you that I will never again taste anything of an intoxicating nature. I only regret you did not ask me to make that promise to you before I left your roof, for the temptations to drink which beset me on shipboard were very great; and when I once yielded, I had no power to stop myself from going into excess. I trust my sufferings and losses may be a warning to all my old associates in London. I intend to write to them all as I have leisure; and I hope they may be induced to make the same resolution that I have done, to seek for happiness in the same way; and to depend solely upon the almighty power of God to enable them to keep their resolutions; for they cannot otherwise keep them.

"Please to give my love to dear Sister, Grandma, Uncle Peter, and to all inquiring friends; and believe me, my honoured parents,

"Your unworthy, but penitent, son,
"CHRISTOPHER COCKLE."

New Year's Day was, as usual, a holiday in Sydney. Most of the citizens were early astir, and preparing to spend the day at some of the lovely rural spots in the suburbs of the city, or at the attractive watering-places which skirt the shrub-margined shores of Port Jackson.

The bells from various church spires rang forth their merriest peals, and flags fluttered gaily from the numerous vessels in port, where the British standard floated proudly from the tower of Government House. Groups of jovial parties, with large picnic baskets, were hastening to the steamboat wharves, the railway station, or to their sailing boats which were lying waiting for them at the jetties in Sydney Cove, Darling Harbour, or Woolloomooloo Bay. In short, the whole population

seemed unanimously bent upon enjoying the day; and displayed an enthusiasm in the cause which was peculiarly Australian.

"Arrah jewel! an isn't it a rale bright, sunshiny mornin?" remarked Tim Rafferty, entering Christopher's room to tell him that breakfast was "all ready an waitin." "It's rayther warrm; still-an-all it's lovely weather, an no mishtake. I don't like to sthop in doors, that's a fact, as the feller sed whin his house was on fire. Shure an it rouses one's heart up like good news to begin the new year wid such bright skies over yer head; an I've jist bin thrying to coax Sally to dance a jig wid me under the oak tree in the back gardin, ony she's afeard ov the folks nixt door laughin at her. Faix, I'd like well enow to sit iverybody in the land laughin to-day, so I wud. What do ye say, honey, iv we put some small stores intil a basket, an take Sally, an Norah, an Barney wid us, an spind the day among the flowers in the Government Gardins? an we can see the boats scud about the Bay while we're sittin under the trees hearin the what's-er-names chirp, an secin the golden butterflies skim about in the sunshine. Wudn't ye like that, Sir?"

"I should like it very much, Tim," said Christopher; "but I was thinking of beginning my duties as schoolmaster, as this is a leisure day. I want, in the first place, to ascertain how far you are advanced as a scholar, so that I may know what books to buy for you."

"Troth, Sir, it 'ull not take yer long to find out all I know about scholarship, as the learned pig said to the Professor. I can tell yez all that while ye was suckin a bantam's egg. I wint through the 'Readin made aisy,' an I larned how to write me own name, and to tot up a few figures, an that's all the edication I've iver had, more's the pity; so ye naydn't sthop at home to-day to examine me; not a bit ov it, Sir. Let's git breakfast, an be off an hear the birds sing among the blossoms; an smell this lovely north-easter as it comes frish off the briny ocean: we can hav a good look, too, at the thousands ov happy holiday faces what ull be out of doors to-day. Och, I feel as light as a corrk jacket this mornin, Sir, so I do; an I'd like to shake hands wid ivery mortal alive that I iver guv a crack wid a stick, or spake a crass word til, that's what I'd like to do; for shure it's New Year's Day, an we're all goin to begin a new tally altagether. Glory be to God!"

"Hoy! Norah an Barney!" shouted Tim, as he returned to the kitchen. "Och shure! an aint yer proud ov yer new rig

out an yer shiny brogans? Yez niver was so smart afore in all yer lives. Come here, honies! here's a shillin apiece for yez, an dont be afther swallowin em. Rin now as fast as ye can an buy some peaches an pine-apples, an some ripe figs an grapes. Troth, ye niver bought sich things as thim afore on a New Year's Day,—nor yit on any other day naythir, I'm thinkin. Scud away, now, an don't stand there grinnin like tickled monkeys. Afther breakfast we'll all go out tagither—iv Misther Cockle plaises, an a rale happy New-Year's Day we'll spind under the green trees. Arrah, Sally, me girl," continued Tim, capering about, with his honest face all over smiles. "Bliss the lovin eyes ov yez, Sally! this is the fisht New Year's Day ye've had the honour an glory ov bein Mrs. Timothy Rafferty, so I'll give ye an extra kiss this mornin for good luck. Niver mind Misther Cockle lookin at us, darlint. Blissins on yer chubby face, yer the purtyest wife in the worrld, so ye are; and I wudn't take a waggin load ov bran new sovereigns for yez, not I. May yez niver wear a widee's cap, darlint, an may yez niver grow thin wid frittin! Och, I'm so happy I cud dance on me head iv anybody ud howld me legs up. Stand by, Misther Cockle, an don't be scared: I *must* shout out somethin or I'll burst me biler—I can't help it, Sir, axin yer pardin. Hurrah! Advance Australia! Hurrah! Rule Britannia! God save the Queen! One shout more, an a rale good un for the last: Hurrah for old Ireland, an Erin-go-bragh! Now, Sally, me darlint! let's have breakfast. I'm aisy now I've let off some ov me fireworks. Say grace, Misther Cockle, iv ye please, Sir.".....

Next morning Christopher mounted the junior clerk's stool in Messrs. Black, Ball, Curry, and Co.'s office. He felt rather disconcerted at first, when the chief clerk, a big-boned, sharp-looking man, explained to him in brusque tones the duties of his office, which were not very dignified; but when he remembered the text which had formed the subject of his early morning meditation, (Isaiah xli. 10,) his courage revived, and he went to work with a manly resolution to overcome all petty obstacles, instead of wasting time by fretting over them.

And Tim entered upon his new engagement the same morning, resolved, as he said, to "shin his way up to the main truck, or as far up as he cud git, iv the mast was too greasy for him to touch the tip-top an turn the dog-vane." After the holidays were over, Barney and Norah were sent to school; for Tim declared, "Iv it tuk ivery blissed hapenny ov his savins, he

wud give his childen an idecation; an maybe it wud be the bist way in the worlrd of investing his money; for he had heard tell ov bhoys an girls in the colony risin up to be rich men an women, an kape their parents illegantly; an shure it was all becase the crathers had had a bit ov schoolin in their young days."

The ten years' subsequent career of Tim, with his varied experience, both in town and country and the neighbouring colonies too; the gradual growth of his influence; with the inauguration of the respectable mercantile firm of Cockle, Rafferty, and Co., and the triumphant return of Timothy Rafferty, Esquire, as Member of Parliament for Kickadingo,—are yet to be recorded. Likewise, Tim's numerous startling adventures, his pecuniary successes, and his trading tactics, together with his comical and critical observations on the leading topics of colonial interest, moral, social, sanitary, and political, and his characteristic remarks on men and things in general; also his continued fidelity to Christopher, and a description of the rapid rise of the latter gentleman, with some account of the fortunes of Phelim's family. All that would doubtless make an interesting and instructive narrative; but whether it will be a task which will be undertaken by me,—if I live,—or left to some abler scribe, will be decided by the amount of favour which this present work receives from the reading public.

My record of Christopher Cockle's capers is finished; and my drowsiest reader is not more rejoiced at the fact than I am myself. The task has occupied me (in addition to other duties not a few) twelve months. Much—if not the greater part of it—I have written while on my back, suffering severe pain; and I can truly testify that book-making under such circumstances is not very easy work.

As I now write, I remember with peculiar feelings that twelve years ago this day (the birthday of our beloved Queen, God bless her!) my gladdened eyes sighted the white cliffs of dear Old England, after an absence of many toilsome years at the antipodes. With a thrill of mingled emotions I recall to mind the lovely May morning when I—in company with five of my esteemed fellow-voyagers—landed at an ancient sea-port town in the west of England, with our pockets full of Australian gold. After breakfasting at an old-fashioned hotel, on real Devonshire fare, I steamed for a few miles up the most romantic of rivers, to join the express train for London,) while the merry birds in

the blossoming hawthorn hedges seemed to gladly welcome back the wanderer to his native land. I am not going to describe my joyous re-unions with beloved relatives and friends, nor even to glance at the varied enjoyments of that long bright summer, until the November frosts warned me to depart again to this evergreen land, *my home*. It would make a very long story, but I never intend to write it. My motive in alluding to the subject is merely to illustrate my gratified feelings at nearing the end of my task. I scarcely heard the thrilling shout of "Land O!" from the sailor at the mast-head of our lofty ship, after a long and stormy voyage over fifteen thousand miles of ocean, with more pleasure than I now hear myself whisper, with wearied breath, "In another hour I shall write 'FINIS,' and my present tedious work will be done."

The book has not yet been written which pleased every reader; so it would be folly to expect that mine will give general satisfaction. I dare say there are many faults in it; but I really do not know how to mend them at present. If I knew of anything in it which may have a mischievous tendency, I would willingly expunge it; and if I knew how to improve my work, without adding to its length, I would gladly do it. In the consciousness that I have tried my best to please and edify my readers, and have carefully considered every sentence that I have written, I think I shall not be much depressed by the strictures of those who do not like my book; and I hope I shall not be over-exalted by the praises of those who do like it. If it should be profitable in a pecuniary way, I shall know what to do with the proceeds; but if it be otherwise, it will not entail loss on any one but myself; and I am too much accustomed to losses and disappointments to grieve over comparative trifles.

The bare idea of my unclassical antipodean production being honoured by the notice of the profound-headed reviewers of the world's metropolis sometimes causes me a little trepidation; but I am soon re-assured by the reflection, that whatever the opinions of the English sages may be, there are thousands of spirited boys and girls in this land whose bright eyes will scan over my pages with pleasure: for I have the comfort of knowing that the gyratic productions of "Old Boomerang's" pen, for many years past, have generally been received with favour by the young Australians. And if I shall happily hear that even one poor neglected shepherd in the wilds of our backwoods has read my book, and been in-

duced, like honest Tim Rafferty, to "search the Scriptures," and to go on his knees in his lonely hut, and cry out, "Quarters, Lord!" and find a rest and peace which he never knew before, that comforting knowledge will sustain me under the severest criticism which my "Australian Capers" may provoke.

The desire to disseminate, for the good of others, some of my long and dearly-bought colonial experience, rather than a hope of *éclat* or gain, has induced me to brave the slights or censure which my book may possibly meet with from those who either cannot, or will not, appreciate my motives in writing it.

I do not yield to a maudlin sentiment when I add, that the bodily infirmity which I feel as I *now* write, almost persuades me that this is the last long task which my pen will ever accomplish; so, with that belief, I would in this *last* paragraph affectionately urge my readers—but especially the young ones—to take warning by poor Christopher Cockle, and shun the evils which caused his miseries; and if they will follow his later example, and henceforward live in "the fear of the Lord," their lives will be useful and happy, and their hearts will constantly be cheered with the hope of "life beyond life." I beg pardon for all my egotistical remarks; but I believe they are not prompted by motives which I should blush for. "No glory I covet, no riches I want;" and the aim of my life—be my future days few or many—is briefly expressed in the following quotation:—

"I live for those who love me,
For those who know me true;
For the heaven that smiles above me,
And awaits my spirit too;
For the cause that lacks assistance;
For the wrong that needs resistance;
For the future in the distance;
And the good that I can do."

THE END.

APPENDIX.

Extract from Letter from HON. GEORGE ALLEN, M.L.C., &c.,
Member of Senate, Sydney University.

MY DEAR SIR,

IN returning you the papers you did me the honour to enclose for my perusal, I beg to say that, as far as I can judge from the perusal of them, (a synopsis of the book,) I think your work will be both instructive and interesting, and one likely to be of great benefit to the public.....Wishing you every success in your undertaking, and requesting you to allow me to enrol my name as a subscriber, I am, &c., &c.

To J. R. Houlding, Esq., Darlinghurst.

From J. H. BLATCHFORD, Esq.

.....IN proof of the sincerity of the foregoing opinion, I beg you will put my name on your subscribers' list for fifty copies of your book.

From REV. W. CURNOW, Editor "Christian Advocate."

.....YOUR book will supply an existing want in Australian literature. Your lengthened colonial experience entitles you to speak on matters pertaining to Australian life; and your many literary contributions to colonial periodicals are, I think, a sufficient guarantee for the favourable reception of the present volume.....

From JOHN FAIRFAX, Esq., J.P., Proprietor of the "Sydney Morning Herald," and "Sydney Mail."

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From ANDREW GARRAN, Esq., M.A., Editor of "Sydney Mail."

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of Pitt Street Congregational Church.

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From the HON. HENRY PRINCE, M.L.C.

.....WHEN you are prepared to send your MSS. of "Australian Capers" to England, I shall have great pleasure in giving you a letter to Mr. Ogg, who, I am sure, will be glad to be of any service.....Be good enough to add my name as a subscriber.....

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.....SUCH a book as yours is much needed; and as it contains amusement with most valuable instruction, it will, I hope, command an extensive circulation, be much read, and do much real good, both here and in the home country.....

From the HON. JOHN BOWIE WILSON, M.L.A., Minister for Lands.

.....I FEEL convinced that, irrespective of its amusing character, the description of the rocks and shoals on which so many young men are wrecked in this country, which your great colonial experience and known love of truth enable you to delineate so faithfully, though dressed in the garb of fiction, may happily have the effect of preventing many young men being sent to this country, as is now too often the case, in whom habits of sobriety are not firmly rooted.....



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